

# *Divergencias en la percepción de prácticas parentales, comportamiento positivo y problemáticas entre padres e hijos*

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## Resumen

El presente estudio tuvo como finalidad analizar las divergencias en la percepción de las prácticas parentales, el comportamiento positivo y las problemáticas entre padres e hijos. Los participantes, padres y adolescentes, colaboraron de manera voluntaria y se evaluaron en las siguientes díadas: 248 padres-hijos, 241 padres-hijas, 237 madres-hijos, y 241 madres-hijas. Los instrumentos utilizados fueron la *Escala de Capacidades y Dificultades* y la *Escala de Prácticas Parentales* para madres y padres. Para lograr el objetivo principal se realizaron análisis de correlación, análisis de senderos y diferencias de medias con muestras relacionadas. Los resultados mostraron correlaciones –de moderadas a bajas– entre las prácticas parentales, los problemas y la conducta prosocial, además de diferentes factores predictores de las conductas de los hijos a partir del sexo de los padres y las prácticas parentales ejercidas. Se presentaron divergencias entre los reportes de prácticas parentales, conducta prosocial y problemas entre los padres y sus hijos. Se concluye que la conducta parental se orienta según el sexo de los hijos, lo cual implica cierta deseabilidad social relacionada con su rol como hombres o como mujeres.

*Palabras clave:* prácticas parentales, problemas de conducta, conducta prosocial, familia, comunicación.

## *Divergences in the perception of parental practices, positive behavior and problems between parents and children*

### Abstract

The purpose of this study was to analyze the divergences in perception of parental practices, positive behavior and problems between parents and children. The participants, parents and adolescents, collaborated voluntarily and were examined in the following dyads: 248 fathers-sons, 241 fathers-daughters, 237 mothers-sons, and 241 mothers-daughters. The psychometric

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instruments used were the Strengths and Difficulties Scale and the Parental Practices Scale for mothers and fathers. To achieve the main objective, correlation analysis, path analysis and differences of means with related samples were performed. The results showed correlations, from moderate to low, between parental practices, problems and prosocial behavior. In addition, different predictive factors of the children's behaviors were obtained, according to the sex of the parents and the parental practices they implemented. Finally, there were divergences between reports of parental practices, prosocial behavior and problems between parents and their children. Therefore, it is concluded that parental behavior is oriented according to the sexual role of their children, which involves social desirability.

*Key words:* parental practices, behavior problems, prosocial behavior, family, communication.

## ***Divergências na percepção de práticas parentais, comportamento positivo e problemáticas entre pais e filhos***

### Resumo

O presente estudo teve como finalidade analisar as divergências na percepção das práticas parentais, no comportamento positivo e nas problemáticas entre pais e filhos. Os participantes, pais e adolescentes, colaboraram de maneira voluntária e foram avaliados nas seguintes diades: 248 pais-filhos, 241 pais-filhas, 237 mães-filhos e 241 mães-filhas. Os instrumentos utilizados foram a *Escala de Capacidades e Dificuldades* e a *Escala de Práticas Parentais* para mães e pais. Para alcançar o objetivo principal, realizaram-se análises de correlação, análises de caminhos e diferenças de médias com amostras relacionadas. Os resultados mostraram correlações — de moderadas a baixas — entre as práticas parentais, os problemas e a conduta pró-social, além de diferentes fatores preditivos das condutas dos filhos a partir do gênero dos pais e das práticas parentais exercidas. Houve divergências entre os relatórios de práticas parentais, conduta pró-social e problemas entre os pais e seus filhos. Conclui-se que a conduta parental é orientada de acordo com o gênero dos filhos, o que implica certa desejabilidade social relacionada com seu papel como homens ou como mulheres.

*Palavras-chave:* práticas parentais, problemas de conduta, conduta pró-social, família, comunicação.

### Introduction

The World Health Organization (WHO; 2018) defines adolescence as the period of human growth and development that occurs between 10 and 19 years. In Mexico, 9.3 percent of the population includes this age, that is, approximately 11 154 278 adolescents (INEGI, 2015). However, many mental health problems tend to appear at the end of childhood or the beginning of adolescence and can have important effects on adolescents' overall health and development (WHO, 2018). Reports on adolescents, between 14 and 19 years old, indicate the presence of consumption of cigarettes, alcohol and marijuana, in the city of Monterrey, Mexico (Díaz, & González, 2014). In another study, scores of depression, somatic problems, thought problems, rule breaking, self-inflicted injuries and aggressive behavior in Mexican adolescents with an age range of 15 to 18 years were reported. (Hernández, Guadarrama, Veytia, & Márquez, 2017).

With regard to the differences between men and women, it has been shown that men presented more externalized and behavioral problems, such as aggression, restlessness, disobedience and scoff, than women, who reported more internalized and emotional problems such as feelings of inferiority, loneliness, sadness, anxiety, (Bailey, Zauszniewski, Heinzer, & Hemstrom-Krainess, 2007; Méndez, Andrade, &

Peñaloza, 2013), depressive symptoms, somatic problems and self-inflicted injuries (Betancourt, & Andrade, 2011); also, problems of anxiety were more frequent in women and attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder more common in men (De la Peña, Gómez, Heinze & Palacios-Cruz, 2014). This confirms the social desirability: women are expected to display a passive, discreet, gentle, kind behavior, while men are expected to be more active, aggressive, dominant, ambitious, open and independent.

It should be noted that studies using the SDQ (Strengths & Difficulties Questionnaires) assessment tool, which has been applied for this investigation, informed that women report more emotional problems, while men present behavior problems more often, hyperactivity/lack of attention and problems with their peers (Giannakopoulos et al., 2009; Schojaei, Wazana, Pitrou, & Kovess, 2009). Nevertheless, a Pakistan study (Syed, Hussein, & Mahmud, 2007) did not point out differences between men and women in the dimension of emotional problems and problems with peers, but they did find them in behavior problems and hyperactivity/attention deficit, which as reported by other studies, this type of behaviors are more frequent in men.

With regard to parents, they instill in children abilities for their later insertion in the social context, through education (Campos, Eceiza, & Paéz, 2004), particularly by means of parental practices, which are mechanisms aimed at the

socialization goals of children and adolescents (Darling, & Steinberg, 1993). According to Smetana (2017), parental practices are a specific behavioral domain, for example, psychological control, behavioral control, monitoring and communication.

Therefore, parental behaviors directly influence the development of their children. Thus, family adversity conditions are associated with the development of internalized and externalized maladaptive behaviors in children and adolescents (Coln, Jordan, & Mercer, 2013). If parents are controlling, demanding and hostile in education, their children show low self-esteem, more aggressiveness, hostility and impatience (Castro, 2005).

In Mexico, it has been reported that, in adolescent men, high psychological control of both parents and low parental supervision influenced the presence of depressive problems, thought problems, self-inflicted injuries and externalized problems. In women, it was reported that, faced with a high psychological control of both parents and little supervision of the father, they presented depressive problems and somatic problems; the less the communication with the mother and the higher the psychological control of the father, thought problems are present (Betancourt, & Andrade, 2011). Consequently, when children grow up in environments in which they are frequently mistreated, they will develop mental models of social relationships that incorporate this abuse (Álvarez, 2010).

On the contrary, Oliva, Parra, Sánchez-Queija, and López (2007) indicated that the affect/communication, promotion of autonomy and sense of humor were linked to a better internal and external adjustment of the adolescent. Also, the perception of a high paternal acceptance together with a low pathological control and a low extreme autonomy promote tranquility (Meier, & Oros, 2012). The description of parenting practices based on positive reinforcement, stimulus control, simple behavior correction and the technique of ignoring undesirable behavior was also associated with a lower percentage of reports of aggressive, negativist and defiant behavior (Morales, Félix, Rosas, López, & Nieto, 2015). Therefore, there is a better adjustment in adolescents when parents show a style of democratic education and supervision of their children's activities (Gómez-Ortiz, Del Rey, Romera, & Ortega-Ruiz, 2015). Parental behavior also influences the prosocial behavior that their children develop, since in the face of parental disinterest, negligence or pathological control there is less prosocial behavior (Richaud de Minzi, Lemos, & Mesurado, 2011).

Concurrently, the problems that parents may present are linked to their parental behavior and in turn, to the way they treat their children; that is to say, the parents' depressive symptoms influence the internalized and externalized symptoms of their children (Reising, et al., 2013). Other

studies indicated that depressive symptoms of parents were associated with poor care, rejection and little monitoring of their children, which leads to the presence of problems in these (Elgar, Mill, McGrath, Waschbusch, & Brownridge, 2007). Depressive symptoms, negative thoughts and chronic stress of the mother are other symptoms that influence the presence of problems in their children (Davé, Sherr, Senior, & Nazareth, 2008, Hall, Rayens, & Peden, 2008).

Regarding parents' expectations, behaviors according to social desirability are expected, that is, parents assume their children will behave in a certain way guided by a series of perspectives and social attributions. Thus, mothers and fathers display different behaviors towards their children according to sex, that is, mothers approach their children more when these are involved in a female situation rather than in a male situation, and they maintain a greater number of interactions with them, although it is greater with girls than with boys, while fathers are more distanced from both their sons and daughters (Rocha, 2004).

The next point shows some discrepancies in the perception of parenting practices and family conflicts between parents and children. It should be noted that during adolescence there are several developmental crises that cause the adolescent to face conflicts instigated by physical, emotional and cognitive changes, which can be produced by the individual, the context or the relationship between them (Papalia, & Martorell, 2017). When adolescents go through confusion and conflict, a certain rejection towards their parents is aroused, generating changes in communication and disobedience. This may lead to punishments provided by the parents, or aggressive behaviors which affect the intra-family union. (Urbano, & Yuni, 2016).

This is a reason whereby there are some discrepancies in the perception of parental practices and behaviors towards their adolescent children. Aguilar-Morales, Aguilar-Morales and Vargas-Mendoza (2006) mentioned that some parents report behaviors considered problematic, but it does not imply the presence of behavioral disorders. They indicate that it is a common mistake to pathologize those behaviors that are inconvenient for parents but that do not take into account the reports of the children. This is a reason why a great part of the diagnoses are established on the basis of the complications that children's behavior poses to parents and not on the suffering reported by children.

Considering also that there are differences according to the sex of the parents, in previous studies it was reported that adolescents have more conflicts with mothers than with fathers, possibly because they spend more time with the mothers and many of the conflicts have to do with daily life (Parra, & Oliva, 2002). In addition, mothers are more aware than fathers of the frequency and emotional intensity

of some conflicts with their children (Rodrigo, García, Máiquez, & Triana, 2005). Although it was reported that mothers have more communication with their children, show more interest in their experiences and are more aware of the things they do (Oudhof, Rodríguez, & Robles, 2012), it was also indicated that communication is more fluid when the father-son and mother-daughter dyads are present (Sevilla, Sanabria, Orcasita, & Palma, 2016; Rodríguez, Del Barrio, & Carrasco, 2009). A research study showed that in families where the mother is more knowledgeable about the activities of the children, and the father is not, the adolescents display risk behaviors such as alcohol and cannabis intake (Jiménez-Iglesias, & Moreno, 2015).

Thus, the present research aimed to analyze the divergences of parental practices, positive behavior and problems between parents and children. To achieve the main objective, two specific objectives were established: the first one, involving the association of parental practices with the problems and positive behavior of adolescents, considering the father-child, father-daughter, mother-child and mother-daughter dyads; and the second, establishing a path analysis to observe the differences in the predictive variables of adolescent behaviors.

## Method

### Design

In order to achieve the objective, a quantitative, non-experimental study was carried out whose design was descriptive and explanatory-correlational, with the purpose of describing the variables and analyzing their incidence and interrelation (Hernández, Fernández & Baptista, 2014).

### Participants

The sample was formed by dyads between the parents and their children, integrated as follows: 248 fathers-sons, 241 fathers-daughters, 237 mothers-sons, and 241 mothers-daughters. All the participants collaborated anonymously and voluntarily, signing an informed consent. The sample was selected in a non-probabilistic manner, by convenience, and the geographical location of the sample was Southern Mexico City. The children had a mean age of 11.25 years ( $SD = 0.80$ ), whereas the mean age for mothers was 37.11 years ( $SD = 6.6$ ) and 40.13 years ( $SD = 7.64$ ) for fathers.

### Instruments

The Scale of Capacities and Difficulties was used (Goodman, 1997), which contains 6 factors: prosocial

behavior, behavior problems, emotional symptoms, hyperactivity/attention deficit and problems with peers. A factor of Total Difficulties was also included, where the factors' score was added up, except for prosocial behavior. The response options for the children were: *it is not true*, *it is half-truth* and *it is true*; the response options for mothers and fathers were: *not true*, *somewhat true* and *absolutely true*. The total alpha for the instrument was .727.

The *Escala de Prácticas Parentales* (Andrade, & Betancourt, 2010). [Parental Practices Scale] was also used. (The dimensions of the scale are: Mother's parental practices: Communication/Confidence, Autonomy, Imposition, Psychological Control and Behavioral Control. Father's parental practices: Communication/Behavioral Control, Autonomy, Imposition and Psychological Control. The response options were: *never*, *few times*, *many times* and *always*. In order for the children to answer the questions about their perception of the parents' practices, a modification was made in the writing of the sentences, without altering the factors and reliability indexes. The scale for the mother's parental practices presented a total alpha of .821 and the one for the father's parental practices was .895.

### Procedure

The application of the instruments was carried out in two phases, one aimed at adolescents and another aimed at their parents:

First phase: authorization was requested to apply the questionnaires to adolescents in elementary schools in the south of Mexico City. The application was carried out in the classrooms during school hours, with the presence of the professor and a trained applicator, who was able to clarify the doubts that arose during the process. Participants were informed that their answers would be anonymous and would be used for research purposes.

Second phase: the questionnaires were sent to the parents in an envelope with an informed consent form to collaborate in the study. It was clarified that the application would be anonymous and for research purposes, and it would not harm the school evaluations of their children. A maximum of three days was indicated to deliver the envelope with the answered questionnaires to the teacher. At the end of the established time, the applicator went to the institutions to collect the questionnaires.

The tests applications were carried out based on the ethical standards of the manual of the American Psychological Association (APA; 2019) and according to the Declaration of Helsinki (WMA; 1964).

*Data analysis*

All the analyzes were carried out using the statistical program IBM SPSS V. 21 and AMOS V. 21. First, the correlations between the parental practices exercised by both the mother and the father with the problems and positive behavior of the adolescents were analyzed. Then, a path analysis was performed to observe how the parental practices predict the behavior of their children. Finally, an analysis of mean differences for related groups (*t Test*) was carried out, to observe discrepancies in parental practices, problems and prosocial behavior between parents and adolescents.

**Results**

This section presents the different results for each of the aforementioned analyzes, ordered according to the objective pursued by each one of them.

*Correlations*

The results obtained in the Pearson correlation of the mother's parental practices and the adolescent behavior

are shown in Table 1, while the results of the fathers are shown in Table 2. Results were organized according to the sex of the adolescents.

Significant correlations are observed in the tables, from low to moderate, in most of the factors. It should be noted that different scores are observed when the parental practices are directed towards a woman or a man. In the case of communication/confidence and emotional symptoms and hyperactivity/ attention deficit, the correlation is significant between the behavior of the mother and her daughter, but there is no association with her son. By contrast, there is an inverse relationship when there are problems with peers.

In Table 2, significant correlations are also observed ranging from low to moderate in most of the factors. As in the previous table, some differences in the sex of the children are observed; a negative correlation can be observed between communication/behavioral control and emotional symptoms when is her daughter, but no correlation is observed when the parental practice is directed towards a son. In another result, psychological control was associated with prosocial behavior when the adolescent is a boy and not when is a girl.

Table 1.

*Correlation between parental practices of the mother perceived by adolescents and their prosocial behavior and problems.*

Variables		Hyperactivity/ attention deficit	Emotional Symptoms	Behavior problems	Problems with peers	Prosocial behavior
Communication/ Confidence	Boys	-.104	-.060	-.244**	-.219**	.330**
	Girls	-.210**	-.159*	-.237**	-.100	.322**
Autonomy	Boys	-.132**	-.176**	-.308**	-.280**	.278**
	Girls	-.272**	-.269**	-.347**	-.187**	.289**
Imposition	Boys	.192**	.260**	.291**	.153*	.045
	Girls	.175**	.260**	.278**	.183**	-.089
Psychological Control	Boys	.136*	.178**	.292**	.225**	-.010
	Girls	.220**	.258**	.361**	.163*	-.196**
Behavioral Control	Boys	-.144**	-.071	-.223**	-.301**	.380**
	Girls	-.302**	-.209**	-.332**	-.127*	.335**

Note. \*\* Significant correlation at 0.01; \* Significant correlation at 0.05

Table 2.

*Correlation between parental practices of the father perceived by adolescents and their prosocial behavior and problems.*

Variables		Hyperactivity/ attention deficit	Emotional Symptoms	Behavior Problems	Problems with peers	Prosocial Behavior
Communication/ Behavioral Control	Boys	-.152**	-.090	-.166**	-.268*	.325**
	Girls	-.282**	-.278**	-.260**	-.139*	.225**
Autonomy	Boys	.274**	-.186**	-.247**	-.313**	.307**
	Girls	-.289**	-.214**	-.313**	-.142*	.295**
Imposition	Boys	.249**	.239**	.195**	.165**	.080
	Girls	-.125**	.224**	.167**	.126**	-.013
Psychological Control	Boys	.265**	.270**	.221**	.204**	-.125**
	Girls	.199**	.278**	.316**	.207**	.083

Note. \*\* Significant correlation at 0.01; \* Significant correlation at 0.05

*Path analysis models*

Regarding the differences in the predictor variables of the adolescents' behaviors, path analyzes were carried out, and the adjusted index criteria of Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) and Bentler-Bonett Normed Index (NFI) were considered, which compare the proposed model and the null model, estimating an acceptable value if it is greater than 0.90. The Bollet Increment Adjustment Index (IFI), the Bentler Benchmark Comparative Index (CFI) and the Average Quadratic Error of Approximation (RMSEA) were also taken up. According to Manzano & Zamora (2009), a cut-off point acceptable in the adjustment is 0.90, and for the RMSEA it is recommended to be less than .05, for if it is less than or equal to 0.05 it indicates an approximation error of the model with reality. The models obtained in this study fulfilled acceptable adjustments.

To obtain the models, the sex of the children was considered. Firstly, the models for mothers were made. In the case of mothers and daughters the following adjustment indices were obtained: Chi square = 18,546,  $gl = 11$  ( $p > .05$ ), an index of adjustment of CFI = .994, NFI = .987, IFI = .994 and RMSEA = .035 (LO 90 = .000 and HI 90 = .062), and for the model of mothers and their sons, the indices were as follows: Chi square = 13.266,  $gl = 10$  ( $p > .05$ ), an index of adjustment of CFI = .997, NFI = .990, IFI = .998 and RMSEA = .024 (LO 90 = .000 and HI 90 = .55).

According to the data obtained in the Path Analysis Models, variations of the impact of the mother's parental practices on the behavior of her sons and daughters were observed, as shown in Table 3. For the boys, the parental practice of autonomy was recurrent, followed by psychological control, behavioral control, communication and imposition. Whereas for the girls, the behaviors of autonomy, psychological control, communication, behavioral control and imposition were more frequent.

Regarding the parental practices exercised by the fathers, two models were obtained that complied with the appropriate adjustment indexes for the explanation of fathers' parental practices and the responses of their children, with the following adjustments for the fathers-daughters model: Chi squared = 16.652,  $gl = 11$  ( $p > .05$ ), an adjustment index of CFI = .994, NFI = .984, IFI = .995 and RMSEA = .032 (LO 90 = .000 and HI 90 = .062) And for the model of fathers and sons were the following: Chi square = 32,660,  $gl = 13$  ( $p < .05$ ), an index of adjustment of CFI = .981, NFI = .969, IFI = .981 and RMSEA = .055 (LO 90 = .32 and HI 90 = .79).

These results are shown in Table 4 and indicate that the practices that impact the behavior of boys were behavioral control/communication, followed by autonomy, psychological control and imposition. For girls were behavioral/communication control, autonomy, psychological control and imposition.

Table 3.  
*Prediction of mother's parental practices in adolescent's prosocial behavior and problems.*

Girls		$\beta$	$r^2$	Boys		
				$\beta$	$r^2$	
Prosocial Behavior	Communication	.13	.10	Communication	.15	
	Autonomy	.15		Autonomy		
	Behavioral Control	.11		Imposition		
Hyperactivity/ attention deficit	Autonomy	.17	.12	Behavioral Control	.20	
	Behavioral Control	-.12		Communication		-.11
	Psychological Control	.18		Autonomy		
Emotional Symptoms	Autonomy	-.18	.12	Psychological Control	.17	
	Psychological Control	.14		Autonomy		-.22
	Behavioral Control	-.15		Psychological Control		
Behavior Problems	Autonomy	-.16	.14	Autonomy	.11	
	Behavioral Control	.09		Communication		-.14
	Psychological Control	.25		Autonomy		
Problems with peers	Autonomy	-.13	.05	Psychological Control	.22	
	Psychological Control	.16		Autonomy		-.12
				Psychological Control		
				Behavioral Control	-.18	

Table 4.  
*Prediction of father's parental practices in adolescent's prosocial behavior and problems.*

Girls		$\beta$	$r^2$	Boys		
				$\beta$	$r^2$	
Prosocial Behavior	Behavioral Control/Communication	.12	.07	Behavioral Control/Communication	.12	
	Autonomy	.19		Autonomy		.18
Hyperactivity/ attention deficit	Behavioral Control/Communication	-.16	.11	Behavioral Control/Communication	.09	
	Autonomy	-.21		Autonomy		-.21
Emotional Symptoms	Behavioral Control/Communication	-.25	.10	Behavioral Control/Communication	.07	
	Psychological Control	.13		Psychological Control		.16
Behavior Problems	Behavioral Control/Communication	-.11	.13	Behavioral Control/Communication	.08	
	Autonomy	-.18		Autonomy		-.16
	Psychological Control	.16				
Problems with peers	Autonomy	-.13	.05	Behavioral Control/Communication	.09	
	Psychological Control	.14		Autonomy		-.19

#### *Groups comparison analysis*

When performing groups comparison analysis, dyads with the responses of parents and their children were taken, and a related samples *t* test analysis was carried out. It is worth mentioning that the condition of normality was covered by measures of skewness and kurtosis. The results are shown in Figure 1. It is revealed that in the parental practices exercised by the fathers, there were significant mean differences in the communication / behavioral control factors ( $t = 2.011$ ,  $sig < .05$ ;  $t = 3.022$ ,  $sig < .05$ ) and psychological control ( $t = 2.618$ ,  $sig < .05$ ;  $t = 2.175$ ,  $sig < .05$ ), being the fathers the ones who consider that they practice these parental behaviors, in comparison with the perception of their sons and daughters. In addition, in the case of the girls, the imposition behavior was also presented ( $t = 1.988$ ,  $sig < .05$ ), being again the fathers who perceive this practice more than their daughters.

The results obtained from the perception between mothers and their children are shown in Figure 2. It is perceived that, in the parental communication practices ( $t = 5.655$ ,  $sig < .05$ ), autonomy ( $t = 2.183$ ,  $sig < .05$ ), psychological control ( $t = 2.593$ ,  $sig < .05$ ) and behavioral control ( $t = 8.216$ ,  $sig < .05$ ), significant differences were found, and mothers are the ones who perceive this type of behavior more than their children. In the case of the girls, there is a difference only in imposition ( $t = 3.569$ ,  $sig < .05$ ), psychological control ( $t = 4.389$ ,  $sig < .05$ ) and behavioral control ( $t = 5.052$ ,  $sig$

$< .05$ ). As in the previous case, mothers mention exercising this practice more than what their daughters perceive.

Again, the dyads were resumed. In Figure 3, the data obtained in the *t* test analysis for related samples are shown. It was found that, in the case of fathers, their sons and daughters perceive more emotional symptoms ( $t = -4.116$ ,  $sig < .05$ ;  $t = -8.022$ ,  $sig < .05$ ), problems with peers ( $t = -6.217$ ,  $sig < .05$ ;  $t = -2.696$ ,  $sig < .05$ ) and total difficulties ( $t = -5.514$ ,  $sig < .05$ ;  $t = -3.272$ ,  $sig < .05$ ), in comparison with their fathers. In the case of boys, higher perception of hyperactivity was also reported ( $t = 3.919$ ,  $sig < .05$ ), and prosocial behavior for girls ( $t = -3.021$ ,  $sig < .05$ ).

Similar data were obtained in the perception of the mother and her children. In Figure 4 the obtained data are observed. Differences were found in emotional symptoms ( $t = -2.288$ ,  $sig < .05$ ), behavior problems ( $t = -2.235$ ,  $sig < .05$ ), problems with peers ( $t = -3.634$ ,  $sig < .05$ ) and total difficulties ( $t = -3.575$ ,  $sig < .05$ ), being the boys who report mainly these problems in comparison with what their mothers perceive; but it happens the other way around when it comes to prosocial behavior, since mothers report more this behavior ( $t = 2.161$ ,  $sig < .05$ ), than what their sons do. In the case of the mother-daughter dyads, differences were found only in two factors: emotional problems ( $t = -5.423$ ,  $sig < .05$ ), whose presence is reported more by the girls, and in the case of behavior problems ( $t = 2.437$ ,  $sig < .05$ ), where mothers perceive them more in their daughters.

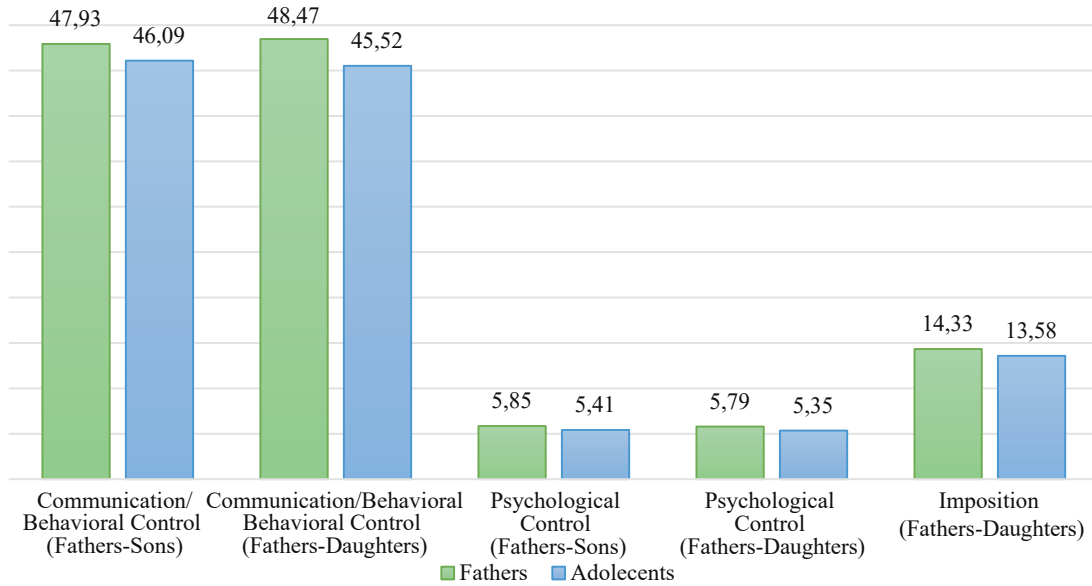


Figure 1. Mean difference of parental practices between fathers and their sons and daughters.

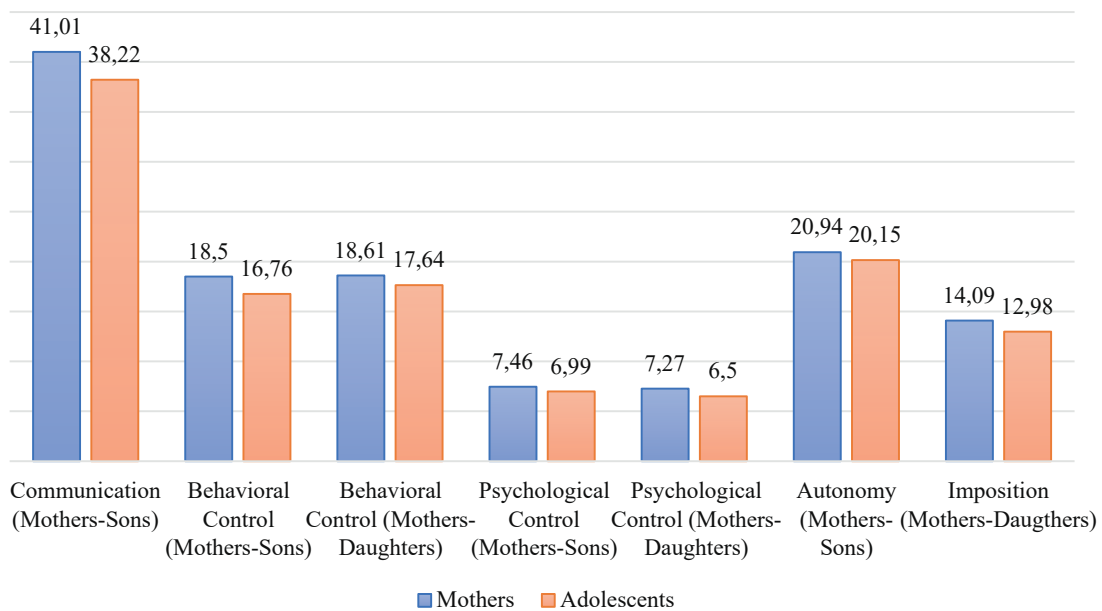


Figure 2. Mean difference of parental practices between mothers and their sons and daughters.

## Discussion

The main objective of this research was to analyze the divergences in the perception of parental practices, positive behavior and problems between parents and their children. Two specific objectives were established: the first one was to analyze the association of parental practices with problems and positive behavior of adolescents; and the

second one, a path analysis was established to determine the differences in the predictive variables of the behaviors in the adolescents. First, the discussion of the literature with the results of the specific objectives will be described and finalized with the main objective.

The results of the analysis of association between parental practices and the problems and positive behavior of adolescents are similar to the results of Álvarez (2010),



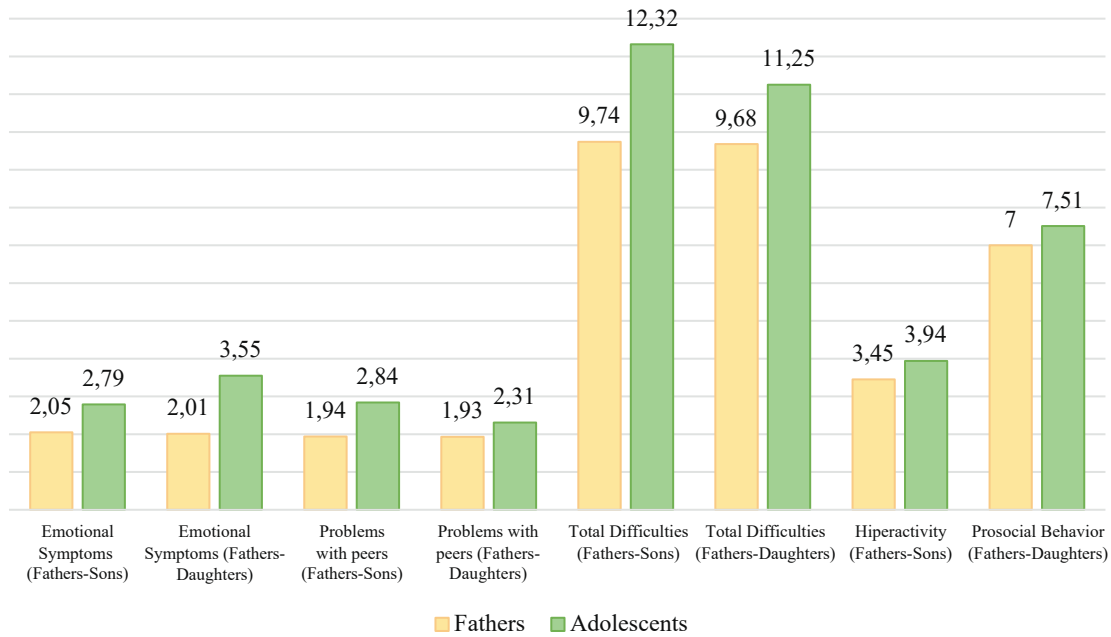


Figure 3. Mean difference of prosocial behavior and problems according to the reports of fathers and their sons and daughters.

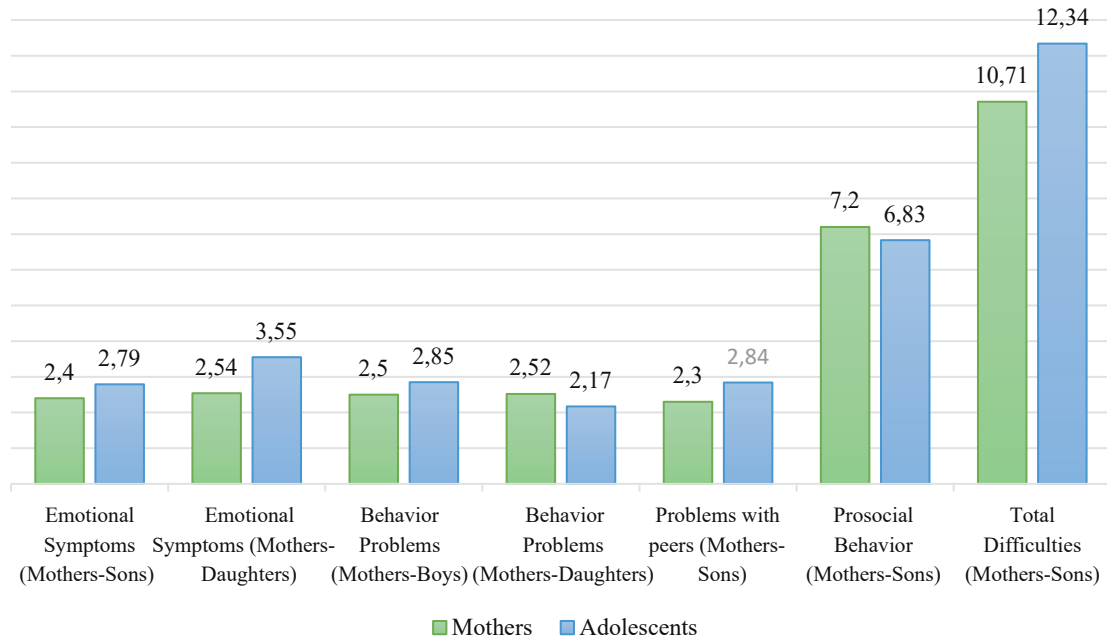


Figure 4. Mean difference of prosocial behavior and problems according to the reports of mothers and their sons and daughters.

Betancourt and Andrade (2011) and Coln, Jordan and Mercer (2013), due to the fact that positive relationships between parental behaviors and problems in adolescents were found, that is, negative parental behaviors such as imposition and psychological control were associated with hyperactivity/attention deficit, behavior problems, problems with peers

and emotional symptoms. On the contrary, communication/confidence and the promotion of autonomy were negatively associated with problems in adolescents and in a positive way with prosocial behavior. As reported by Richaud de Minzi, Lemos, & Mesurado (2011), prosocial behavior diminishes in the face of parental disinterest, negligence

or pathological control. Therefore, it is important that the education of parents towards their children be provided through positive practices, such as communication, autonomy and behavioral control, with the aim of reducing problems in children and increasing positive behaviors such as prosocial behavior.

Regarding pathway analysis, differences were observed in the predictors of parental behavior in adolescents. When it comes to the mother, there was more communication, autonomy and psychological control, while concerning the fathers, the main behaviors were psychological and behavioral control. These results are similar to those reported by Oudhof, Rodríguez and Robles (2012) who mentioned that mothers spend more time with their children and are more aware of their activities; thus, they could increase parental behaviors of communication and behavioral control. Fathers, in comparison, reported exerting more control, but are not very aware of their children's activities (Rodrigo, García, Máiquez & Triana, 2005).

In this way, the obtained models reinforce what Rocha (2004) mentioned about social desirability and the different roles that parents adopt depending on the sex of the children, including a distancing from the father, which can be observed numerically in the lower values with respect to the mother both in the correlations and in the different  $r^2$  values in the path models. This implies the traditionalist role played by parents, where fathers are less involved in raising children, while there is less communication with them (Rodríguez, Del Barrio, & Carrasco, 2009; Sevilla, Sanabria, Orcasita, & Palma, 2016).

Finally, the main objective was to analyze the divergences in the perception of parental practices, positive behavior and problems between parents and children. The results differentiate the scores between parents and children, both in parental practices as in problems and prosocial behavior. In terms of parental practices, parents have a perception that they control their children behaviorally and psychologically, far more than boys and girls believe, that is, parents think they know and therefore recognize where and what their children are doing, but children do not perceive this control to the same extent. In addition, parents perceive they perform some kind of psychological control over their children, that is, they blackmail and threaten them, but their sons and daughters do not believe the same and score lower around this issue.

In the case of mothers, there was a difference like the one of the father in both sons and daughters; likewise, they perceive that they control the behavior of their children in a greater scale than the adolescents reported. For mothers, there are variations in the parental practices according to the sex of the children; for example, in the case of the boys,

the mothers report a greater communication with them; while with girls, mothers think that they impose, blackmail or threaten them more than their daughters report. This implies that mothers tend to behave differently according to the sex of their children.

Mothers and fathers tend to underestimate the problems of their sons and daughters, which is shown by the data found in this study: fathers indicated lower levels of behavior problems, emotional symptoms and problems with peers, than those reported by their children; moreover, fathers also disfavor the prosocial behavior of their daughters and report lower scores than girls in terms of their difficulties. Paradoxically, mothers report a greater number of behavior problems in their daughters, compared to the scores obtained by the girls, and overestimate their sons' prosocial behavior. The aforementioned shows a disturbing trend towards gender stereotypes where boys have no problems, while girls can be perceived even with fewer behavior problems than those that they actually present. All these findings agree with the ones of authors such as Aguilar-Morales, Aguilar-Morales & Vargas-Mendoza (2006) who mentioned that some parents report that the behaviors of their children can be considered problematic, and that a large part of the diagnoses are established on the basis of the complications generated by the behavior of the children in the parents and not by the experiences reported by children.

Based on the above, it can be affirmed that there are divergences between the reports of parental practices, prosocial behavior and problems between parents and their children. This implies both that parents often do not have direct knowledge of what their children do and that they do not actually carry out appropriate parental practices, although they are convinced that they do so. In the same way, the cultural influence is undeniable because boys are considered by both fathers and mothers as having fewer problems and more prosocial behaviors, and girls are considered by the mother with more problems. In addition to this gender effect, it is observed that the mother continues to have a central role in the parenting of children through their own parental practices and has more influence in the development of both problems and prosocial behavior in their children.

Finally, the use of a non-probabilistic sample was considered as a limitation of the study, since it is not representative of the Mexican population. It is important to mention that the internal and external validity was affected, because environmental, organismic and situational factors could not be controlled in the application of the instruments, in addition to those related to data analysis and measurement errors. To reduce this aspect, it is recommended to replicate the study with a larger and representative sample. However, this study

shows the need to design intervention strategies where positive parental practices are encouraged to diminish the problems presented by adolescents. Through adequate communication, parents would become aware of their children's activities and support them when they need it, decreasing in turn, the divergences in the perception of parental practices, problems and positive behavior between parents and children.

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