

The Structural Model of Democratic Parenting Based on Parental Stress Index and Couples' Communication Patterns with the Mediating Role of Wisdom

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The present study aimed to examine the structural model of the relationship between parental stress and couples' communication patterns with democratic parenting, with the mediating role of wisdom.

Methods: The research method was applied in nature, considering the potential use of the data, and the design was descriptive-correlational. The statistical population consisted of parents of elementary school students in Tehran during the 2022-2023 academic year, from which 639 participants were selected through cluster sampling. Data collection tools included the Parental Stress Index by Abidin (1990), the Couples' Communication Patterns Scale by Christensen and Salovey (1984), the Sense of Coherence Scale by Antonovsky (1993), and the Authoritative Parenting Questionnaire by Robinson et al. (2001). The data were analyzed using structural equation modeling (SEM).

Findings: The results showed that the stress index, demand/withdrawal, and criticism/defense patterns had a significant negative relationship with authoritative parenting ($P < 0.01$). Wisdom and constructive interactions demonstrated a positive relationship with authoritative parenting ($P < 0.01$). Additionally, the results of the modeling indicated that the model had a good fit, and wisdom could mediate the relationship between parental stress, constructive interactions, and demand/withdrawal with authoritative parenting.

Conclusion: The findings showed that the variables of parental stress, couples' communication patterns, and wisdom influence parenting.

Keywords: Parental Stress Index; Couples' Communication Patterns; Wisdom; Democratic Parenting

1. Introduction

Despite the increasing influence of new socialization factors, such as social networks, peer groups, and the ongoing trend of modernization, particularly in the area of child socialization, the family still holds a unique position in the psychosocial development of individuals. The family is the first institution that guides humans in accepting social norms and facing future challenges. Inefficient parenting styles, marital instability, and the inability to provide a suitable environment can lead to delinquent behaviors throughout a child's life (Folorunsho et al., 2024).

There is considerable variation in parenting approaches among families, with each parent adopting a different method of interacting with and guiding their children. This diversity arises because numerous factors influence parenting attitudes, and parents together form a unique approach to child-rearing (Sanvictores & Mendez, 2022). While we cannot deny the structural economic and social factors inherent in shaping human character and family stability, family capacity-building is an integral part of efforts to secure children's rights and welfare. Parenting style acts as a catalyst in the process of child upbringing and socialization. Among the various parenting styles described by psychologists, the democratic style, sometimes referred to as the authoritative style, has been identified as a cultural model that warrants special attention for child well-being (Zhussipbek & Nagayeva, 2022).

According to Baumrind, an array of parental attitudes toward the child, communication methods, parenting practices, and the emotional climate within the family environment lead to the establishment of a parenting style. Among the different styles—neglectful (permissive), authoritarian, and democratic (authoritative)—democratic parents exhibit more warmth, positive control, and reasonable expectations in their parenting approach (Aprianti et al., 2024; Sarfika et al., 2024). Democratic parenting fosters an environment of encouragement, equality, and mutual respect, where children feel empowered to make choices, participate, and experience unity with the family and society, playing an active role in achieving shared goals (Festy et al., 2022).

Numerous studies indicate that democratic parenting is positively related to increased independence, motivation for learning, self-efficacy, healthy social interactions, emotional intelligence, and reduced addiction to digital devices and smartphones (Harahap & Sahputra, 2023; Hidayatullah et

al., 2023; Lima-Quezada et al., 2024; Rambe et al., 2023; Sarfika et al., 2024).

Studies show that negative experiences in the family lead to problematic behaviors in children. Moreover, these negative experiences encompass mental health disorders, chronic stress caused by social and economic issues, marital discord, feelings of inadequacy, lack of awareness about proper child-rearing practices, and incorrect parenting styles (Işık, 2021; Liman & Köksoy, 2021).

Parenting style and parental stress significantly affect children. The emotional health of parents and effective stress management promote the psychological well-being of the child (Aprianti et al., 2024). Parental stress directly influences parenting styles, meaning that higher parental stress levels lead to increased use of authoritarian and permissive styles. Indirectly, through the mediation of psychological flexibility, it results in less use of democratic parenting and more reliance on authoritarian or permissive styles (Fonseca et al., 2020). Stress is one of the most critical issues of the present century and has attracted significant research interest across various sciences, including psychology, earning the label "the disease of civilization."

Parental stress is related to several characteristics of the child, such as demandingness and inattention/hyperactivity, as well as certain traits of the parents, including depression, perceived competence, and other situations directly connected to parenting roles, such as marital relationships and parental health. The new responsibility that spouses assume as parents is inherently stressful and may sometimes result in feelings of inefficacy in their parental roles. This is especially true when parents feel incapable of controlling situations, leading to increased tension (Rollè et al., 2017). Parental stress is associated with authoritarian and permissive parenting styles. Parents experiencing high levels of stress, regardless of their children's physical state, are more likely to adopt authoritarian or permissive parenting styles. It has been observed that increasing parental stress significantly influences parenting style, pushing parents toward permissive or neglectful styles (Chang et al., 2023).

Without a doubt, the type of communication within the family, particularly between parents, can influence the parenting style they employ. In a study on couples with children, Couples' communication patterns, including constructive communication (involving mutual dialogue, attempts to understand the partner, and negotiation for problem-solving), avoidance (characterized by behaviors aimed at avoiding conflict and distancing after tense discussions), and demand/withdrawal (where one spouse

seeks change and negotiation while the other avoids such engagement), influence family harmony. Improving communication patterns and fostering constructive communication in the home will enhance compatibility (Okesina, 2022).

Constructive communication can predict greater autonomy and acceptance in the parent-child relationship. When couples are committed to using appropriate and constructive communication strategies, it fosters healthy and constructive relationships, including acceptance and warmth, logical reasoning, and freedom and autonomy (all components of democratic parenting) (Hazarati Ehsanifard et al., 2021). Parents inclined toward conversational orientation in their relationships tend to favor democratic parenting, promoting open and comfortable dialogue in interactions (Abdullah & Salim, 2020).

Studies on violence have shown that exposure to parental violence and witnessing aggression between parents can result in psychological trauma, including depression, anxiety, delinquency, and aggression later in life. Wisdom enables parents to overlook certain childish behaviors and focus on appropriate conduct, ultimately leading to the adoption of democratic parenting. The overarching truth about democratic parenting is that, first, discipline must be proportional to the child's misbehavior, and second, parents must be aware of situational factors when enforcing rules and consider the traits that affect the child's behavior. Wisdom facilitates this awareness (Tippe).

Various definitions of wisdom share significant commonalities. Wisdom is a complex, multifaceted construct comprising interconnected cognitive and non-cognitive components, which play a crucial role in parenting. The cognitive components include deep, experience-based knowledge of complex human existence and a form of reasoning marked by self-reflection, relativism, and intellectual humility. Non-cognitive components encompass deep curiosity about human existence, openness to new ideas and experiences, emotional regulation, compassion, and self-transcendence. According to Ardel, wisdom consists of three dimensions: cognitive, reflecting a desire to understand truth and accept the contradictory aspects of human existence and life's unpredictability; reflective, indicating the ability to evaluate life and relationships from multiple perspectives; and affective, involving positive emotions and behaviors, such as empathy and compassion toward oneself and others (Moghadam & Ghamarani, 2022).

Since the distinction between "stressful parenting" and "parental stress" within the family system is important,

wisdom can help develop expertise in reducing suffering and enhancing well-being for oneself and others. These characteristics can influence understanding situations and foster flexibility in fulfilling parental responsibilities, thereby reducing the parental stress index (Crnic & Coburn, 2020).

Wisdom is linked to how individuals interact with their partners, families, and friends. Those who believe relationships have growth potential tend to expect more from their relationships, are more open to different opinions, and are more optimistic about overcoming problems together. Wisdom is associated with a general view of life as one of continuous change and growth, leading individuals to reflect on themselves and their behavior during challenges. Overall, wisdom and close relationships are dynamically intertwined. It appears that thought control and wisdom are critical variables in foresight and managing couples' communication patterns (Rejali & Yousefi, 2021).

Although wisdom was initially recognized as a construct in the humanities, the distinction between the humanities and experimental sciences is no longer absolute. These distinctions have evolved along with empiricism and the capacity to test increasingly complex hypotheses using advanced methodologies. Consequently, wisdom, like awareness, emotion, cognition, stress, and flexibility, can be examined through a scientific and neuropsychological lens (Jeste et al., 2020).

The good news is that, similar to related areas in positive psychiatry, such as resilience and optimism, there is evidence that wisdom can be enhanced, and doing so can improve quality of life and well-being. A recent meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials targeting individual components of wisdom, such as empathy and compassion, found that nearly half of the psychosocial or behavioral interventions were effective, with medium to large effect sizes (Treichler et al., 2022).

Given the aforementioned importance of effective family communication, the present study aims to develop a structural model of democratic parenting based on the parental stress index and couples' communication patterns, with the mediating role of wisdom.

2. Methods

2.1. Study Design and Participants

The research method is applied in nature, considering the potential use of the data, and in terms of design, it is descriptive and correlational. The statistical population

consists of parents of elementary school students in Tehran during the 2022-2023 academic year. According to Kline's (2016) theory, which suggests that in structural equation modeling (SEM), the sample size can be determined as 5 to 15 observations per measured variable, with an effect size of 0.19, power of 0.80, 7 latent variables, 73 items as observed variables, and an alpha of 0.05 to achieve a 95% confidence interval, the sample size was calculated to be 742. The sampling method was random cluster sampling. Geographically, Tehran was divided into five sections: North, East, West, South, and Central. The 22 districts within these geographic sections were identified, and one district from each section was randomly selected. The selected districts were: North: District 1, Central: District 10, East: District 13, West: District 5, and South: District 20. In each district, one girls' school and one boys' school were randomly selected. Upon visiting the schools, two classes were randomly chosen, and questionnaires were distributed to the parents. Parents were assured of confidentiality and informed consent. Ultimately, 658 individuals responded to the questionnaires, representing an 88% response rate. After excluding 19 incomplete questionnaires, 639 valid responses were analyzed.

2.2. Measures

2.2.1. Parenting Styles

The Parenting Styles Questionnaire is a 32-item Likert scale test with response options ranging from never, sometimes, almost (average), most of the time, to always. The items are designed to measure three parenting styles—authoritative (democratic), authoritarian, and permissive—based on Baumrind's parenting theory. In addition to the three parenting styles, the questionnaire includes seven communication dimensions. The democratic style includes the dimensions of warmth/support, reasoning/induction, and autonomy. The authoritarian style includes three dimensions: physical coercion, verbal hostility, and non-reasoning/punitive. Lastly, the permissive style includes one dimension: permissiveness. It is scored on a 5-point Likert scale (from never to always). A cut-off score of 38 is used for this parenting style, indicating that a score higher than 38 suggests a greater inclination toward the democratic parenting style. Alizadeh (2000) translated this questionnaire into Persian, with an internal consistency of 0.90 for the authoritative scale among normal children. In the study by Alishiri (2013), Cronbach's alpha for this questionnaire was calculated as 0.89 (Alishiri, 2013). In the

present study, Cronbach's alpha for the subscales of acceptance and warmth, autonomy, and reasoning-induction were 0.83, 0.75, and 0.77, respectively.

2.2.2. Communication Patterns

Christensen and Salovey (1984) designed this questionnaire to examine mutual communication patterns among couples. The short form is derived from the Couples' Communication Patterns Questionnaire and includes 11 items designed to assess marital communication. The short form allocates four dimensions: items 1 to 3 measure constructive interactions; items 4 and 5 measure wife-demand/husband-withdrawal; items 6 and 7 measure husband-demand/wife-withdrawal; items 8 to 10 measure criticism/defensiveness, and item 11 measures avoidance. Responses are rated on a 9-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (not at all likely) to 9 (very likely). A high score on the constructive interactions scale indicates appropriate communication, whereas low scores suggest inappropriate communication. Conversely, high scores on the demand/withdraw, criticism/defense, and avoidance scales indicate inappropriate communication, and low scores indicate appropriate communication. Futris et al. (2010) found validity values ranging from 0.397 to 0.451 and reliability values for criticism/defense at 0.83, demand/withdraw at 0.71, and constructive interactions at 0.61 (Futris et al., 2010). In Rahimi, Mavandavi, and Zare's (2018) study, Cronbach's alpha for this questionnaire was 0.73 for criticism/defense, 0.65 for constructive interactions, 0.66 for husband-demand/wife-withdrawal, and 0.63 for wife-demand/husband-withdrawal (Hazarati Ehsanifard et al., 2021). In the present study, Cronbach's alpha was estimated at 0.767 for constructive interactions, 0.61 for wife-demand/husband-withdrawal, 0.54 for husband-demand/wife-withdrawal, 0.719 for criticism/defensiveness, and 1 for avoidance due to it being a single-variable construct.

2.2.3. Parental Stress

The short form of this scale consists of 36 items and three subscales, including parental distress, dysfunctional parent-child interactions, and difficult child characteristics. The items are scored on a Likert scale to assess parental stress, with 12 items per subscale. The parental distress subscale measures parents' feelings of stress related to parenting based on personal stressors. The difficult child subscale reflects behaviors from children that make parenting easier

or harder. The dysfunctional parent-child interactions subscale examines the expectations parents have for their children and how these expectations influence parenting. Parents respond to each item by selecting the option that best describes their experience on a 5-point scale, ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The cut-off score for the total Parental Stress Index is 90, with scores above the average indicating high parental stress. The reliability coefficient for this tool in Babakri et al.'s (2018) study was 0.89, with correlation values between 0.23 and 0.68, all significant at the 0.01 level (Babakri et al., 2018). In the present study, Cronbach's alpha for the dimensions of parental distress, dysfunctional parent-child interactions, and difficult child characteristics was 0.877, 0.907, and 0.946, respectively.

2.2.4. Wisdom

This scale was designed by Ardel in 2003, and a 12-item short form was later extracted for research purposes. The scale consists of three dimensions—reflective, cognitive, and affective—each represented by four items in the short form. The questionnaire uses a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree) to assess wisdom. Three reverse-coded items are included. The mean score of the 12 items represents the level of wisdom, with a score of 4 indicating high wisdom in each dimension. Higher scores on the scale indicate greater wisdom, while scores below 3 in the overall average or any dimension suggest lower wisdom. Thomas et al. (2017) examined the psychometric properties of the 12-item version and found acceptable content validity, face validity, and reliability, with a correlation of 0.70 with the 39-item version. In Pourtaheri and Azad Disfani's (2020) study, Cronbach's alpha for the short wisdom scale was 0.72 (Pourtaheri & Azad Disfani, 2020). In the present study, Cronbach's alpha for the cognitive, reflective, and affective dimensions was

0.547, 0.587, and 0.577, respectively, with a shared reliability coefficient above 0.7, making it acceptable for research purposes.

2.3. Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using structural equation modeling (SEM) to assess the relationships between the variables in the study, including the Parental Stress Index, communication patterns (constructive interactions, demand/withdrawal, criticism/defense, avoidance), wisdom, and democratic parenting. Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated to examine the associations between the predictor variables, and the indirect effects were evaluated to identify any mediating role of wisdom in the relationships. The variance inflation factor (VIF) and tolerance statistics were used to check for multicollinearity, while the Durbin-Watson statistic tested the independence of residuals. The model fit was assessed using the χ^2/df ratio, comparative fit index (CFI), and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), with acceptable thresholds indicating a good fit for the model. All statistical analyses were performed using LISREL software.

3. Findings and Results

The demographic results of the study sample showed that 80% of the participants were mothers, and 20% were fathers. Regarding age distribution, 6.6% were between 20-30 years old, 47.6% were between 30-40, 41.3% were between 40-50, and 4.5% were between 50-60. In terms of the number of children, 37.6% had one child, 58.2% had two children, 4.1% had three children, and 0.2% had four or more. As for education level, 31.6% of the parents had a high school diploma, 12.7% had an associate degree, 37.6% had a bachelor's degree, 14.4% had a master's degree, and 3.8% had a doctorate or higher.

Table 1

Examination of Non-Collinearity among Predictor Variables

Variable	Tolerance Statistic	Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)	Eigenvalue	Durbin-Watson
Parental Stress Index	0.576	1.737	0.016	2.17
Constructive Interactions	0.834	1.199	0.066	
Demand/Withdrawal	0.538	2.002	0.066	2.17
Criticism/Defense	0.610	1.639	0.065	
Avoidance	0.853	1.628	0.139	
Wisdom	0.631	1.582	0.052	2.17

According to Table 1, the non-collinearity among the research variables was assessed using variance inflation factor (VIF), tolerance index, Durbin-Watson statistic, and eigenvalue. These tests were conducted to check for multicollinearity among the predictor variables.

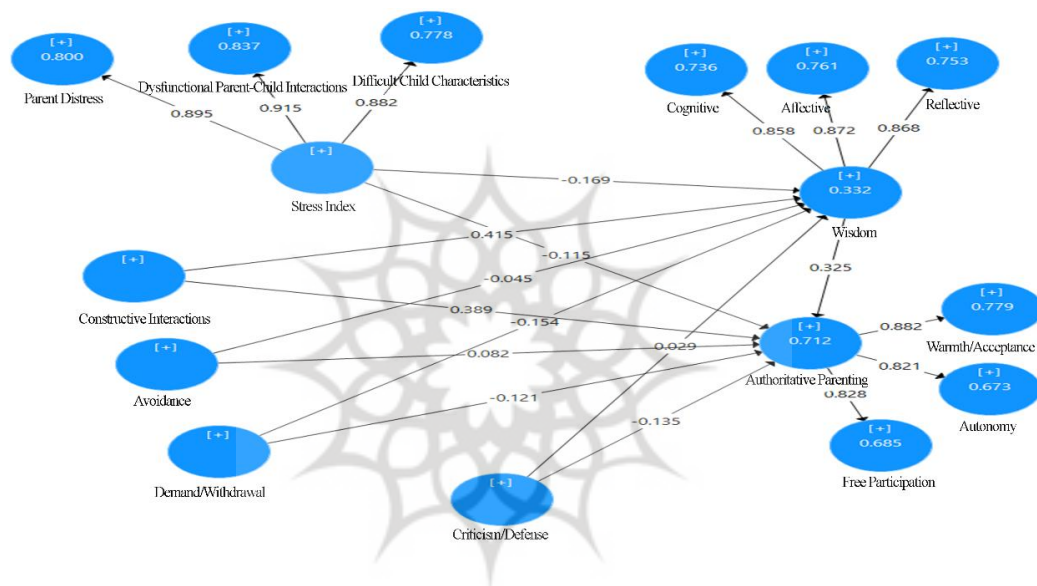
a) Variance Inflation Factor (VIF): First introduced by Tenenhaus (2005), this statistic is used to diagnose multicollinearity among predictor variables. A cut-off point of 2 is considered, meaning that if the VIF value exceeds 2 for any variable, critical collinearity exists, and the

regression is invalid. The results indicated that no critical collinearity was present among the variables.

b) Tolerance Index: The tolerance index is the inverse of VIF. The closer the value is to zero, the greater the multicollinearity. In this study, each variable explained its own variance, and these errors should not have multicollinearity with one another. The Durbin-Watson test identifies this non-collinearity. The statistic should fall within the range of 1.5 to 2.5, and otherwise, the regression model is invalid. In this study, the Durbin-Watson value was 2.17, which is within the acceptable range.

Figure 1

Measurement Model with Standardized Coefficients



In Figure 1, based on the factor loadings for each variable in the structural model, and following the recommendations that factor loadings should be between 0 and 1 and that values between 0.30 and 0.60 are acceptable, while values

greater than 0.60 are highly desirable, it can be concluded that the relationships between factors and their dimensions were highly desirable.

Table 2

Direct Effects among Research Variables

Relationship	Path Coefficient (β)	Standard Error (SE)	t-value	p-value	Result
Parental Stress > Wisdom	-0.169	0.077	2.190	0.029	Accepted
Avoidance > Wisdom	-0.045	0.061	0.742	0.458	Rejected
Constructive Interactions > Wisdom	0.415	0.09	4.622	0.000	Accepted
Demand/Withdrawal > Wisdom	-0.154	0.056	2.744	0.006	Accepted
Criticism/Defense > Wisdom	0.029	0.042	0.694	0.488	Rejected
Parental Stress > Authoritative Parenting	-0.115	0.048	2.374	0.018	Accepted
Avoidance > Authoritative Parenting	0.082	0.071	1.148	0.252	Rejected
Constructive Interactions > Authoritative Parenting	0.389	0.08	4.831	0.000	Accepted
Demand/Withdrawal > Authoritative Parenting	-0.121	0.04	2.998	0.003	Accepted
Criticism/Defense > Authoritative Parenting	-0.135	0.026	5.195	0.000	Accepted
Wisdom > Authoritative Parenting	0.325	0.027	12.235	0.000	Accepted

Table 2 presents the direct effects between the variables in the model. According to the results, the Parental Stress Index ($\beta = -0.169$, $p < 0.029$) and Demand/Withdrawal ($\beta = -0.154$, $p < 0.006$) had a negative and significant relationship with wisdom, while Constructive Interactions ($\beta = 0.415$, $p < 0.000$) had a positive and significant relationship with wisdom. Criticism/Defense and Avoidance did not show a significant relationship with wisdom. The Parental Stress Index ($\beta = -0.115$, $p < 0.018$), Demand/Withdrawal ($\beta = -0.121$, $p < 0.003$), and Criticism/Defense ($\beta = -0.135$, $p < 0.000$) had a negative relationship with authoritative parenting, while Constructive Interactions ($\beta = 0.389$, $p < 0.000$) and Wisdom ($\beta = 0.325$, $p < 0.000$) had a positive and significant relationship with authoritative parenting. However, Avoidance did not show a significant relationship with authoritative or democratic parenting.

Moreover, the indirect path coefficient showed that wisdom played a mediating role for the Parental Stress Index ($VAF = 0.32$, $p < 0.03$), Constructive Interactions ($VAF = 0.25$, $p < 0.000$), and Demand/Withdrawal ($VAF = 0.29$, $p < 0.005$) in relation to democratic parenting. However, wisdom did not mediate the relationship between Avoidance and Criticism/Defense with democratic parenting.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The statistical analysis results showed that the research variables were able to predict 0.75 of the variance in democratic parenting. Both the direct and indirect effects must be considered in explaining the variance. The results indicated that the Parental Stress Index had a negative relationship with democratic parenting, which is consistent with the prior findings (Chang et al., 2023; Delvecchio et al., 2020; Fonseca et al., 2020; Lima-Quezada et al., 2024). These studies showed that increased parental stress leads parents to use permissive and authoritarian parenting styles and results in less reliance on the democratic parenting style.

Similarly, the findings revealed a negative relationship between the Parental Stress Index and wisdom, meaning that wisdom can serve as an expertise in reducing suffering and enhancing well-being for oneself and others. Consequently, the characteristics associated with wisdom can influence understanding situations and psychological flexibility in taking responsibility for child-rearing and reducing stress levels (Kernick & Coburn, 2020). Few studies have explored the relationship between wisdom and parental stress. However, this finding is supported by prior research (Moghadam & Ghamarani, 2022; Rejali & Yousefi, 2021;

Tippe), which suggest that higher levels of wisdom increase the likelihood of using the democratic parenting style.

Limited research has been conducted on the relationship between wisdom and parenting styles. Most studies have focused on the relationship between wisdom and parenting quality or parental competence. However, these studies have acknowledged the role of increased warmth, acceptance, and reflection in interacting with children, which Robinson et al. have identified as characteristics of the authoritative (democratic) style (Boumpouli et al., 2022).

The statistical findings of this study showed a partial mediating role of wisdom between the Parental Stress Index and democratic parenting. This means that wisdom alone can predict the adoption of the democratic parenting style, and with increased wisdom, parental stress decreases, thereby increasing the use of the democratic parenting style. No study was found that directly supports this indirect effect, but studies showing relationships between the Parental Stress Index and parenting styles, and between wisdom and stress, indirectly support this finding. For instance, research (Chang et al., 2023; Delvecchio et al., 2020; Fonseca et al., 2020) demonstrated a negative relationship between the Parental Stress Index and democratic parenting, with increased stress leading parents toward permissive and authoritarian styles. Additionally, studies (Boumpouli et al., 2022; Moghadam & Ghamarani, 2022; Tippe) showed that higher levels of wisdom contribute to the proper use of the democratic parenting style.

The statistical analysis also revealed significant relationships between communication patterns and democratic parenting. Constructive interactions had a direct relationship with democratic parenting, and as constructive interactions increased, so did democratic parenting. Conversely, criticism/defense, avoidance, and demand/withdrawal had an inverse correlation with democratic parenting, meaning that as these factors increased, democratic parenting decreased. Therefore, the communication patterns between spouses can predict their parenting style. This finding aligns with the results of prior studies (Abdullah & Salim, 2020; Hazarati Ehsanifard et al., 2021; Lavaf & Shokri, 2021). However, for avoidance, the results indicated no significant relationship with democratic parenting and wisdom. This may be because wise spouses sometimes avoid conversations that may lead to conflict, in an effort to create a calm environment for their children. While this strategy may have long-term adverse effects, disrupting constructive communication patterns and increasing feelings of loneliness, as Kuster et al. (2017)

found in their study, spouses concerned with preserving their relationship sometimes avoid discussions to prevent conflict (Kuster et al., 2017).

The findings of this study showed that wisdom partially mediated the relationships between constructive interactions, demand/withdrawal, and criticism/defense with democratic parenting. This means that the relationship between these factors and democratic parenting is facilitated by wisdom, but wisdom did not mediate the relationship between avoidance and the dependent variable. This indirect relationship has not been reported in any previous study, but the direct effects among the variables have been confirmed in other studies. Studies (Abdullah & Salim, 2020; Hazarati Ehsanifard et al., 2021) also found that effective communication between spouses extends to their relationship with their children and improves their parenting style. Similarly, in the direct relationship between wisdom and communication patterns, studies such as those by Rajali and Yousefi (2021) have noted that wisdom, as an influential personality variable, enhances communication between spouses. Families that adopt conversation orientation and conformity in their communication patterns interact freely, consistently, and spontaneously, which leads to constructive interactions within the family, between parents and children, fostering security and a sense of calm (Rejali & Yousefi, 2021).

Overall, the statistical results of the present study suggest that the model of democratic parenting, based on the Parental Stress Index and couples' communication patterns with the mediating role of wisdom, fits well. This indicates that wisdom mediates the relationship between the Parental Stress Index, couples' communication patterns, and democratic parenting. In other words, reduced parental stress and effective communication patterns between spouses, facilitated by wisdom, lead to the adoption of the democratic parenting style, or put simply, wisdom strengthens this relationship.

5. Suggestions and Limitations

Research in the field of humanities often encounters limitations beyond the control of the researcher. Despite efforts to control the influence of certain variables, this study faced several limitations in methodology and interpretation, some of which are noted below:

- The cross-sectional nature of the study: The time and circumstances of the participants when completing the questionnaire were significant, and

there is a possibility that some individuals were in temporary stressful or environmental conditions, leading to emotional or less accurate responses that could not be controlled or verified.

- The study was conducted only on parents in Tehran. Given the cultural and ethnic diversity in Iran, it is not possible to generalize the results to other cities or ethnic groups. Due to time constraints, it was not feasible to examine or compare different ethnic or cultural groups.
- The cluster sampling method led to the selection of specific schools for the study. However, some parents were not fully cooperative in completing the questionnaires, and due to limited time and financial resources, re-sampling was not possible.

Research Suggestions:

- This study was conducted among parents of students in Tehran. It is recommended that similar research be carried out in other cities with different ethnic cultures.
- A review of theoretical backgrounds revealed that most parenting studies focus on the impact of parenting styles on children's lives and characteristics. However, there is a lack of research on the role of important variables in shaping parenting styles. Therefore, in addition to schemas and attachment styles, it would be beneficial for future research to focus on personality variables that can be improved.

Practical Suggestions:

- Given the importance of family stability for mental and social health in society, educating parents on parenting styles and proper communication in the home is crucial.
- It seems necessary to develop self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, communication skills, responsibility, and decision-making through life skills training. Couples therapy and group education in schools are recommended to cover a broad spectrum of families.
- Including such educational programs as part of marriage counseling, pre-pregnancy, and during pregnancy is recommended. Couples sometimes avoid these programs due to lack of awareness or economic challenges, but these programs can enhance parenting capacity, preserve family unity, and ensure its stability.

Authors' Contributions

All authors have contributed significantly to the research process and the development of the manuscript.

Declaration

In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

Transparency Statement

Data are available for research purposes upon reasonable request to the corresponding author.

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Declaration of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

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Ethical Considerations

The study protocol adhered to the principles outlined in the Helsinki Declaration, which provides guidelines for ethical research involving human participants.

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