



## PARENTING STYLES AND ITS EFFECT ON EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT AMONG CHILDREN

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### Abstract

Different parenting styles create different social and emotional environment in the lives of children within the home. Most scholars focus on authoritarian and authoritative parenting styles in their studies and disregard the permissive and neglectful parenting styles (Maysel, Scharf, & Sholt, 2003; Takeuchi & Takeuchi, 2008). The present study focused on all the four parenting styles (viz. authoritarian, authoritative, permissive and neglectful) and to study individually the impact of four parenting styles on emotional development of child. It was concluded that authoritative parenting style considered to be most effective and have positive effect on the emotional development of child.

**Keywords:** Development, Emotional, Parenting Style, Child.

When thinking of parenting most people picture clumsy feeding times, changing diapers, running after a yelling child in a crowded super market. Parenting not only confined to fulfill the basic survival needs of the child but parents have a significant influence on children overall development including their personality, emotional development, and behavioural habits. In other words, parents have significant influence on how their children turn out to be. Also, being physically present is not enough. Parents that may be nearby but that are not emotionally involved tend to raise children in a manner are more distressed and less engaged with their activities. A study suggests that the emotional involvement of parents really does matter and affects the outcome of their child's emotional competence and regulation (Volling, 2002). Keeping this in mind, parents should spend quality of time with their children because if they do not give enough of their time and commitment into showering emotionally into their child, the child will struggle to learn how to regulate his emotions and interact with others appropriately.

### Children Emotional development

Children learn and acquire attitude, traits and behaviour right from infancy which they exhibit throughout their life time. So parents act as primary agents of socialization and this important role of socializing help their children to adjust to their social environment. Hughes, Kroehler and Zanden (1999) supported this view that parents are expected to have significant influence on the emotional, cognitive and social development of children.

Children's emotional development consists of three components: (1) *cognitive-experiential*, includes individuals' thoughts and awareness of feelings (for example, trying to recall a pleasant emotion); (2) *behavioral-expressive*, includes overt emotional signs (for example, laughing or crying); and (3) *physiological-chemical*, means covert emotional signs (for example, sadness or happiness).

The emotional development of a preschool aged child influences many attributes of a young child's life, and parenting plays a role in how each child acquires developmentally appropriate emotional skills. Various studies have found that the effects of parenting style on children's emotional development and behavior (Liem, Cavell, & Lustig, 2010; Pezzella, 2010; Schaffer, Clark, & Jeglic, 2009; Steward & Bond, 2002; Timpano, Keough, Mahaffey, Schmidt, & Abramowitz, 2010).

### Parenting Styles

Parenting styles means parent's pattern of behavior and attitudes which form the emotional climate in which parents raise their children. Different parenting styles have different effect on children's social and emotional development. It is observed that affective and warm parenting such as parent's responsiveness, supportiveness, and involvement and behavioral control like clear rules and limit setting deployed by parents have been linked to low levels of behavioural problems and depressive symptoms among children. Whereas, high parental psychological control like controlling child's behavior and emotions through psychological means, such as guilt in turn, has been found to be associated with increased anxiety, distress, and depressive symptoms among both children and adolescents.

According to Darling & Steinberg (1993), parenting style is defined as those characteristic of a parent that changes the effectiveness of family socialisation practices and children's receptiveness to such practices.

According to Akhtar (2012), parenting styles are the way parents take care of their children which can have impact on the children's personality development and the ways of interacting with social and close relations.



Further, parenting style has two independent dimensions: (1) Demandingness, defined as demands that parents make on children to adjust in society through behavior control, confrontation, and maturity demand and supervision of the child's activities and (2) responsiveness, defined as the extent to which parents promotes individuality and self-assertion by being accustomed, supportive, and submissive to children's requests including autonomy support and speculated communication (Baumrind,1995).

### Types of Parenting Styles

Various typologies of parenting styles have been developed and utilised in literature but Baumrind (1991) typology (authoritative, authoritarian, permissive styles and neglectful ) has been largely accepted because of its comprehensiveness.

Figure 1: The relationship of the dimensions of demandingness and responsiveness with four parenting styles.

	Demandingness	
	HIGH	LOW
HIGH	Authoritative	Permissive
LOW	Authoritarian	Neglectful

#### a) Authoritative Parenting Style

Authoritative parents tend to develop clear guidelines and expectations for their children, by providing lots of nurturing and love. The authoritative parent tries to control their child in a rational manner. Such a parent encourages reciprocity and shares the reasoning behind their rules. These parents promote both autonomous self-will and disciplined conformity. They exercise firm control with some topics but the child is not restricted completely. According to Kracke (1997), this type of parenting is characterised by high levels of nurturance, involvement, sensitivity, reasoning and encouragement of autonomy. They provide a positive emotional climate for their children in order to promote autonomy and support assertiveness and individuality.

#### b) Authoritarian Parenting Style

The authoritarian parent tries to shape, control, and evaluate the behaviour and attitudes of the child according to their set standard of conduct. Obedience and punitive measures are used to restrain self-will. If the child actions or beliefs goes against from their parent's belief and expectations then the child is punished. This type of parenting tries to establish respect of authority, respect for work and preservation of traditional order and structure. Verbal give and take is not encouraged and the parent's word should be accepted as right. According to Turner (2009), such parents characterised exhibit highly directive behaviours, high levels of restriction and rejection behaviours and power-asserting behaviours of children. These parents are highly demanding and unresponsive.

#### c) Permissive Parenting Style

The permissive parent attempts to behave in a non-punitive, accepting, and affirmative manner towards the child's impulses, desires, and actions. In this type of parenting style, less expectation and few demands are made of the child regarding such things as house works. This style does not require the parent to behave as an active agent responsible for shaping or modify the child's behaviour and attitudes. The child is allowed to regulate his or her own activities. The parent neither control nor motivates the child to meet external standards. Self- regulation is considered to be the right strategy for the child to live freely without external control. Parents believe that punishment is an ineffective way and has irresistible negative effects on child's behaviour. They also believe that close supervision, high demands, and high expectations of parental authority results in rebelliousness among children.

#### d) Neglectful Parenting style

Neglectful parenting style was identified by Maccoby and Martin (1983) when they expanded Baumrind's parenting style. In this style, parents show behavior that is low in monitoring and low in supporting their children. Low responsiveness and low demandingness are two basic elements that characterize neglectful parenting. Parents who scored lower on responsiveness and lower on demandingness are considered as neglectful parents. This parenting style has also been called 'rejecting-neglecting'.



### **Theoretical background**

According to the *bioecological model* (Process–Person–Context– Time model), *Person* refers to child or other, *Context* refers to the broader environment, and *Time* refers to the duration and historical background, all play a role in how recent processes influence developmental outcomes. Based on this model, the product of experience with caregiver and children's individual characteristics influence future developmental paths, and thus caregiving experiences may have different impacts on children with different temperaments ( Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994).

*Goodness of fit model* describes how well the child's temperament "fits" with the people in his environment and how likable the people in the environment consider the child to be. This model argues that any temperamental characteristic is neither good nor bad but that changes in the social environment may cause changes in the expression of emotional reactions aroused by temperament. Thus, adaptive outcomes will result when the temperamental characteristics of the child fit with the expectations and demands of the environment. Goodness-of-fit is seen as an interactive approach considering the child, parents, and environment—that is, the child's and parents' as well as environmental circumstances are taken into account (Thomas & Chess, 1977)

### **Emotional development and Parenting styles**

#### **Authoritative Parenting and Emotional Development**

To emphasize the importance of parenting on emotional development of child, researchers focused on the relationship between children's development of emotion, cognition, and the parenting style they received (Furnham & Cheng, 2000; Steinberg, Blatt-Eisengart, & Cauffman, 2006).

In reviewing the studies on authoritative parenting style, it was found to minimize depressive symptoms (Liem, Cavell, & Lustig, 2010).

Further, Jackson and Schemes (2005) found that authoritative parenting may contribute to less depression among children. Similarly, authoritative parenting was found to be associated with happiness, lower experience of negative emotion, high self-esteem, high motivation to gain independence, assertiveness, good judgment, self-sufficiency and correlated to other positive cognitive and socio emotional outcomes among children of means (Furnham & Cheng, 2000; Klein, O'Bryant & Hopkins, 1996; Mayseless, Scharf & Sholt, 2003).

According to Steinberg (2001), it was found that children from *authoritative families* are well-behaved and accomplished at school. They tend to be emotionally healthy, resourceful, and socially-adapt.

According to Melnick and Hinshaw (2000), authoritative characteristics shown by parents such as affection, monitoring, and stability have impacts on children's emotions.

#### **Authoritarian Parenting and Emotional Development**

In a study on parenting style and depression among adolescents, Joshi et al.(2009) found that, adolescents who lived with authoritarian parents had more depression than those who lived with authoritative parents.

Thompson et.al (2003) also found that if children between the age group of 5 and 10 lives in an authoritarian family then they are likely to suffer from depression.

Steinberg (2001) reported that children from authoritarian families are more likely than other children to suffer from anxiety, depression, and poor self-esteem.

#### **Permissive Parenting and Emotional Development**

When reviewing the research on parenting style, it is difficult to find a study that singled out permissive parenting style as most parenting scholars tend to do research about authoritative and authoritarian parenting styles. Irrespective of it, it has been found that the permissive parenting can cause problematic behavior among children (Baumrind, 1996; Joshi et al. 2009).

A study by Joshi et al. (2009) found that the association between parenting style and depression is not consistent. They found that for adolescents raised by permissive parents there were negative and weak correlations with depression than adolescents raised by authoritative parents. Interestingly, they found that highly permissive parents had adolescents with lower levels of depression than authoritative parents.



Milevsky et al. (2007) found that permissive parenting contributes to depression among children because when parents are too lenient and allowed whatever the children wish to do, the children have no focus and might do something inappropriate. One may predict that permissive parenting results in more problematic children's behaviour.

According to Gfroerer et al. (2004) permissive parents are more supportive of what their children want to do and this attitude decreased depression among children.

However, Baumrind (1971) argued that permissive parenting has both positive and negative effects on children.

### **Neglectful Parenting and Emotional development**

Fewer studies were found that focused on the neglectful parenting style. Study have shown that neglectful parenting style also has an effect on children's emotions and behaviours (Knutson et al., 2004). Spinrad et al.(2004) found that children of neglectful or uninvolved parents may develop mental health problems and emotionally unstable.

### **Conclusion**

To summarize, among the four parenting styles, authoritative parenting is considered to be appropriate one and it has overall emotional development of child. Parenting decisions affect how children turn out physically, socially, and emotionally, but that is to be taken care that parents should not be obsessed with the idea to have a perfectly well-adjusted child. There is need to understand that there is no perfect formula for parents to model behavior or speak to children in certain ways to make them have a perfect emotional development outcomes. Parents can help their children develop into emotionally stable people by giving them a supportive environment, positive feedback, role models of healthy behavior and interactions, and someone to talk to about their emotional reactions to their experiences.

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