

## PARENTING AND ITS INFLUENCE ON CHILD BEHAVIOUR

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### ABSTRACT

#### BACKGROUND

Parenting is the process of giving care to the young and preparing them to face the challenges of life. Diana Baumrind introduced the models of parenting, authoritative, authoritarian and permissive depending on the level of demandingness and responsiveness. Defective parenting is associated with problem behaviours in children. This study was undertaken to find out which parenting style is least associated with behavioural problems and what are the problems associated with the different parenting style.

#### MATERIALS AND METHODS

46 children who were admitted with minor illness at the institute of Child Health, Kottayam from January 2017 to Oct 2017 were enrolled after getting informed consent and IRB clearance. Purposive sampling method were used for the study. Demographic data was entered into a proforma. The PSDQ and CBCL 1½ -5 questionnaire was given to mothers to assess the parenting style and behavioural problems in their children. Data was analysed with statistical tests. The t test, one way ANOVA, Pearson correlation coefficient and regression analyses were used for the analyses.

#### RESULTS

The parenting styles of the mothers and the behavioural problems seen in their children were studied in this research. There was no significant difference in behavioural problems between the different age group studied and there was no difference in problem behaviours between male children and female children. Authoritative parenting style was least associated with problem behaviour. Authoritarian parenting style is associated with internalizing problems and permissive parenting is associated with externalizing problems.

#### CONCLUSION

Since the behaviour problems tends to linger through adolescence and adulthood, parental education regarding the positive parenting style and interventions can be given from early childhood during routine child care and structured programs.

#### KEYWORDS

Parents, Parenting, Problem Behaviour, Childcare, Permissive.

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#### BACKGROUND

Parenting is the process of giving care to the young and preparing them to face the challenges of life. Parents by the way of providing childhood experiences and environment guide child's development and contribute to child's mental health. Parenting style is extremely important in the development of the child's character, personality and emotional health, social and cognitive development and academic performance. Discipline is adopted by parents and caregivers to teach children the normative behaviours of their society. Maccoby and Martin.<sup>1</sup> put forward two key dimensions of parenting; responsiveness and demandingness. The extent of the parent's strictness and control denotes demandingness and the level of

involvement, acceptance and parental warmth denotes responsiveness. With these key dimensions Diana Baumrind.<sup>2</sup> produced the models of parenting, authoritative parenting, authoritarian parenting and permissive parenting. The authoritarian parenting style is having high control and low warmth and is characterized by commands, yelling and physical punishment. The authoritative parent has high warmth and high control and parent exhibits firm limit setting, yet has compassion and warmth. Permissive parents have high warmth and low control. Children from authoritarian families were often withdrawn and distrustful. In authoritarian families, there will be bidirectional communication. In permissive homes, there is no limits to the behaviour and it often spoils the child.

**Authoritative Parents-** They are responsive and demanding. They are assertive but not restrictive. The parents want their children to be socially responsible, self-regulated and assertive.

**Authoritarian parents-** They are not responsive but highly demanding. The parents want their order to be obeyed without explanation.

**Permissive parents-** they are highly responsive but not demanding. They are lenient, avoid confrontation Barber<sup>3</sup> et

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al. introduced three dimensions of parenting: parental support, psychological control and behavioural control. Parental support refers to affective and compassionate qualities. Psychological control refers to the attempt of the parent to intrude into the psychological and emotional development of the child. This is by guilt induction, withdrawal of love and affection or shaming. Behavioural control is by regulation of the child's behaviour through firm and consistent discipline. Behavioural control is high in authoritative and authoritarian parents. But authoritarian parents resort to psychological control when they are dissatisfied with the child.

Defective parenting style is associated with problem behaviour in many children. Problem behaviour manifests in children in mainly two ways. Internalizing behaviour and externalizing behaviour.<sup>4</sup> In internalizing behaviour problems the negative emotions are directed at oneself in the form of withdrawal, fearfulness, inhibition and anxiety. In externalizing problem behaviour, the negative emotions are manifested as anger, aggression and frustration which are directed at others. Both internal and external problem behaviours have shown to be stable from early childhood onwards.<sup>5</sup> These behaviours lead to problems in school, peer relationships and mental health.<sup>6,7</sup> One of the most studied approaches of parental influence on human development is the concept of parenting style by Baumrind.<sup>2</sup> Many studies have proven that there is statistically significant relation with parenting and developmental outcomes like performance, achievement strategies, self-regulated learning, achievement goals, self-efficiency and wellbeing of students.<sup>8</sup>

There is a concern for the behavioural and emotional problems in children. Children with co-occurring internalizing and externalizing problems were most likely to show persisting problems. The use of evidence based treatment for these young children may prevent psychiatric problems across the life course. In Achenbach's<sup>9</sup> classification the externalizing problems are attention problems and aggressive behaviour, and internalizing problems are emotionally reactive, anxious depressed, somatic complaints and withdrawn variable.

Wray and Greaves<sup>10</sup> introduced the concept of positive deviance in growth and development. "Women who can cope do manage to rear healthy and active children," although belonging to the same backward communities. Caregivers who behave and interact positively and consistently even when faced with multiple socio-economic deprivations, tend to rear children with better growth and development.

In a study by Jones DJ<sup>11</sup> it was found that maternal warmth was a stronger predictor of decreases in child's aggressive behaviour. Study by DeGarmo DS<sup>12</sup> shows a reduction in maternal depression following intervention resulted in reduction in externalizing problems in the boy, reduction in externalizing problems in the boy resulted in reduction of depression in the boy.

## Objectives

1. To assess the influence of parenting style on the child's behaviour.
2. To find out which parenting style is associated with behavioural problems in children.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

46 children between 1½ -5 years, who were admitted with minor illnesses in the institute of Child health Medical College Kottayam were taken as study sample from Jan 2017 to October 2017 were enrolled for the study after IRB clearance and taking written consent. The sampling method used was purposive. The study was correlational in nature to investigate the relationship in the parenting style and the behavioural and emotional problems in children between the ages of 1½ to 5 years.

For collecting data in this research, a demographic variable proforma, parenting style and dimensions questionnaire and child behaviour checklist were used.

Parenting style and dimensions questionnaire.<sup>13</sup> Scores form the parents parenting style with respect to Baumrind's primary parenting styles typologies: authoritarian, permissive, and authoritative, were taken. Mother completed the PSDQ (Robinson et al., 2001) to evaluate parenting styles. PSDQ contains 32 statements. PSDQ measures dimensions of parenting styles using authoritative (15 items grouped into three subscales; warmth and support, reasoning/induction and autonomy granting), authoritarian (12 items grouped into three subscales: physical coercion, verbal hostility and non-reasoning/punitive) and permissive (5 items for one factor-indulgent dimension) scales. Mother rated items using a five-point scales from never to always (coded 1 to 5). Robinson et al (2001) reports the reliabilities as follows: authoritative ( $\alpha=.86$ ), authoritarian ( $\alpha = .82$ ), and permissive ( $\alpha= .64$ ).

**Child Behaviour Checklist-** The Child Behaviour Checklist (CBCL 1½ -5).<sup>14</sup> measures behavioural, social and emotional problems in children of age 1½-5. The tool consists of 100 items in 7 syndrome scales. The syndrome scale consists of 4 internalizing domains and 2 externalizing domains and sleep problem domain. The internalizing score is a combination of emotionally reactive, anxious depressed, somatic complaints and withdrawn scores and externalizing problem score formed by combining attention problems and aggressive behaviour score. The parents were informed to respond on the basis of how the child was in the previous 2 months. The respondent is asked to rate 99 problem items as 0 for not true of the child, 1 for somewhat or sometimes true, and 2 for very true or often true. In addition, item 100 requests respondents to write in any additional problems that were not previously listed. Filling the CBCL 1½-5 forms required about 15-20 minutes. To determine which problem items tend to occur for a syndrome, analysis of CBCL 1½-5 scoring was done. The total score for each syndrome scale is computed by summing the scores of 1 and 2 for all the items of the scale. By obtaining the total score for each syndrome scale and circling the score in the column of

numbers in the graphic display, one can see how the child compares with the normative sample on each scale. Higher scores indicate more of that particular behaviour problem. The total problem score includes the total of the internalizing problem score, externalizing score, sleep problems score and few other problems listed as "other problems".<sup>9</sup>

The content validity of CBCL 1½-5 scales is  $P < 0.01$ , that is they discriminate between the referred and non-referred children. The test-retest reliability of problem scale score was supported by a mean test-retest  $r = .85$  for CBCL scores. CBCL is adopted by the investigator (Achenbach, T.M., & Rescorla, L.A. 2000)

The score of the internalizing scale, externalizing scale and total raw scores of the children were analysed with the PSDQ score and sub-factor analyses were done with SPSS software.

**RESULTS**

The age based analyzes shows that in the study of 46 children, the age group 1.5-2 was 1 (2.2%), 2-3 years were 24 (52.2%), 3-4 years were 8 (17.45%) 4-5 years were 13

(28.3%). The frequency and percentage of males and females were equal 23 (50%).

Behavioural problems according to sex are studied using independent sample t test.

Emotional reactive ( $p=0.648$ ), anxious depressed behaviour ( $p=0.691$ ), somatic complaints ( $p=0.1$ ), withdrawal ( $p=0.903$ ), sleep problems ( $p=0.169$ ), attention problems ( $p=0.59$ ), aggressive behaviour ( $p=0.701$ ), internalizing problem ( $p=0.472$ ), externalizing problem ( $p=0.905$ ), total problems ( $p=0.876$ ) have no statistically significant difference between scores of males and females (since  $p > 0.05$ ).

Behavioural problems according to different age groups were studied using one way ANOVA. Emotionally reactive ( $p=0.722$ ), anxious depressed ( $p=0.764$ ), somatic complaints ( $p=0.938$ ), withdrawal symptoms ( $p=0.938$ ), sleep problems ( $p=0.702$ ), attention problems ( $p=0.402$ ), aggressive behaviour ( $p=0.836$ ), internalizing problems ( $p=0.917$ ), externalizing problems ( $p=0.460$ ) and total problems ( $p=0.985$ ) have no statistically significant difference in behavioural problems of different age groups.

	Authoritative Parenting Score		Authoritarian Score		Permissive Parenting Score	
	r	p value	r	p value	r	p value
Emotionally Reactive	0.105	0.488	0.449	0.002**	0.309	0.036**
Anxious Depressed	.202	0.178	0.436	0.002**	0.149	0.322
Somatic Complaints	0.17	0.258	0.034	0.823	0.144	0.339
Withdrawal Symptoms	-0.054	0.719	0.642	0.00**	0.089	0.555
Sleep Problems	0.133	0.377	-0.125	0.407	0.165	0.274
Attention Problems	0.079	0.603	-0.08	0.596	0.382	0.009**
Aggressive behaviour	-0.015	0.922	0.18	0.232	0.568	0.00**
Internalizing	0.118	0.436	0.41	0.005**	0.269	0.071
Externalizing	0.015	0.923	0.113	0.453	0.57	0.000**
<b>Total Score</b>	<b>0.156</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>0.358</b>	<b>0.015**</b>	<b>0.456</b>	<b>0.001**</b>

**Table 1. Correlation between Parenting Styles (Authoritative, Authoritarian and Permissive)- RS and the Problem Behaviour**

\*\*means the correlation coefficient is statistically significant with  $p \text{ value} < 0.05$ ; r is Pearson Correlation coefficient.

This table shows that in authoritative parenting styles correlation of none of the problem score is statistically significant. Children who are emotionally reactive, anxious/depressed, and has withdrawn symptoms have higher correlation with authoritarian parenting style and are statistically significant. Thus, the internalizing problem score

has high correlation with authoritarian parenting style. Children who have attention problems and aggressive behaviour has high correlation with permissive parenting style which are statistically significant. So, the externalizing problem behaviour has statistically significant high correlation with permissive parenting style. Permissive parenting style is also associated with emotionally reactive variable.

	R <sup>2</sup>	F	P value	Authoritative Parenting Score		Authoritarian Score		Permissive Parenting Score	
				Beta	P value	Beta	P value	Beta	P value
Emotionally Reactive	0.258	4.878	0.005	0.131	0.836	1.407	0.005	0.970	0.08
Anxious Depressed	0.212	3.763	0.018	0.528	0.368	1.243	0.007	0.293	0.559
Somatic Complaints	0.05	0.737	0.536	0.717	0.263	-0.072	0.881	0.523	0.34
Withdrawal Symptoms	0.445	11.219	0.000	-0.705	0.128	1.975	0.000	-0.08	0.838
Sleep Problems	0.078	1.189	0.326	0.759	0.272	-0.641	0.223	0.761	0.2
Attention Problems	0.179	3.051	0.039	0.429	0.45	-0.502	0.248	1.397	0.006
Aggressive behaviour	0.331	6.924	0.001	-0.324	0.787	0.649	0.477	4.402	0.000
Internalizing	0.211	3.747	0.018	0.538	0.733	3.074	0.013	2	0.144
Externalizing	0.326	6.758	0.001	0.106	0.945	0.147	0.9	5.798	0.000
<b>Total Score</b>	<b>0.279</b>	<b>5.421</b>	<b>0.003</b>	<b>1.299</b>	<b>0.517</b>	<b>2.953</b>	<b>0.057</b>	<b>5.089</b>	<b>0.005</b>

**Table 2. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis for Parenting Styles Predicting the Behavioural Problems**

P value < .05 is statistically significant.

Emotionally reactive ( $F=4.873$ ,  $p<.05$ ), anxious /depressed ( $F=3.763$ ,  $p<.05$ ), withdrawn symptoms ( $F=11.219$ ,  $p<.05$ ), attention problems ( $F=3.051$ ,  $p<.05$ ), aggressive behaviour ( $F=6.924$ ,  $p<.05$ ), internalizing ( $F=3.747$ ,  $p<.05$ ), externalizing ( $F=6.738$ ,  $p<.05$ ) and total score ( $F=5.421$ ,  $p<.05$ ) have statistically significant relation with the parenting styles. Each parenting style was analysed with the behavioural problem score variable. None of the behavioural problems were associated with the authoritative parenting style.

It was seen that authoritarian parenting style is associated with emotionally reactive ( $\beta=1.407$ ,  $p=.005$ ), anxious/ depressed ( $\beta=1.243$ ,  $p=.007$ ), withdrawn symptoms ( $\beta=1.975$ ,  $p=0.00$ ) and internalizing problems ( $\beta=3.074$ ,  $p=.013$ ). In all these problems  $p<0.05$ , so it is statistically significant.

In the case of permissive parenting style, it was seen that it is related to the attention problems ( $\beta=1.397$ ,  $p=0.006$ ), aggressive behaviour ( $\beta=4.402$ ,  $p=0.00$ ) and

externalizing problems ( $\beta=5.798$  and  $p=0.00$ ) and total problem ( $\beta=5.089$ ,  $p=0.005$ ). In these problems  $p<.05$  which is statistically significant. Here  $R^2$  gives the percentage of variability explained by the parenting styles for each behavioural problem and Beta gives per unit increase in behavioural score corresponding to each parenting style.

The sub factors for the parenting style were analysed with the behavioural problems. The sub factors for authoritative parenting style is 1. warmth and support, 2. reasoning and 3. autonomy granting. Somatic complaints were associated with the reasoning sub factor of this scale. But no other sub factor was associated with any behavioural problem.

The sub factors in authoritarian parenting style are (1). Physical coercion (2). verbal hostility (3). punitive. Permissive parenting style was analysed for relationship with the behavioural problems in children.

	R <sup>2</sup>	F	P value	Sub Factor 1 (Physical Coercion)		Sub Factor 2 (Verbal Hostility)		Sub Factor 3 (Punitive)	
				Beta	P value	Beta	P value	Beta	P value
Emotional Reactive	0.244	4.509	0.008	-0.049	0.936	0.471	0.436	1.243	0.025
Anxious Depressed	0.259	4.903	0.005	0.858	0.118	-0.5	0.349	1.057	0.03
Somatic Complaints	0.031	0.451	0.718	0.589	0.339	-0.605	0.318	0.134	0.803
Withdrawal Symptoms	0.459	11.596	0.000	0.267	0.535	0.371	0.383	1.306	0.001
Sleep Problems	0.04	0.588	0.626	-0.683	0.31	-0.062	0.925	0.402	0.494
Attention Problems	0.066	0.989	0.407	-0.387	0.504	0.738	0.198	-0.635	0.214
Aggressive Behaviour	0.105	1.643	0.194	-1.88	0.16	2.312	0.081	0.888	0.445
Internalizing	0.205	3.616	0.021	1.071	0.479	-0.197	0.895	2.756	0.042
Externalizing	0.082	1.248	0.304	2.267	0.191	3.05	0.076	0.253	0.866
<b>Total Score</b>	<b>0.155</b>	<b>2.569</b>	<b>0.067</b>	<b>-1.428</b>	<b>0.734</b>	<b>4.432</b>	<b>0.287</b>	<b>5.556</b>	<b>0.137</b>

**Table 3. Sub Factor Analysis- Authoritarian**

P value<.05 is statistically significant.

From this table, it is seen that the emotionally reactive variable ( $F=4.509$ ,  $p=0.008$ ), Anxious/ depressed problem ( $F=4.903$ ,  $p=0.005$ ), withdrawn problem ( $F=11.596$ ,  $p=0.000$ ) and thus the internalizing problems ( $F=3.616$ ,  $p=0.021$ ) have statistically significant relation with the punitive sub factor of the authoritarian parenting style. Here  $R^2$  gives the percentage of variability explained by the sub factors for each behavioural problem and Beta gives per unit increase in behavioural score corresponding to each sub factor.

**DISCUSSION**

This study examined the problem behaviour in young children aged 1½ -5 years. It was found that there is no difference in behavioural problems depending on the different age group studied. This study also examined whether there is any difference in behavioural problems between the sex of children and it is shown that there is no difference in behavioural problems between male and female children.

The parenting style has an influence on the behavioural problems in the child. The present study examined the correlation between the parenting styles and the problem

behaviour. It revealed that the best parenting style which is least associated with the problem behaviour is the authoritative parenting style. Similar observations were seen in studies by Darling, Steinberg, 1993.<sup>15</sup> Of the three parenting dimensions by Baumrind, the parenting style which was found to be negatively associated with behavioural problem was authoritative parenting style. In authoritative parenting style, there is high demandingness and responsiveness. Responsiveness is important for prompt and appropriate interactions between the mother and child. Responsiveness has benefits in the psychological and physical wellbeing of the child. A study in Bogota, Colombia in 1980.<sup>16</sup> which included 280 children who had a risk of under nutrition were given either food supplementation, home visits, both or routine medical follow-up. The twice weekly home visits included educating mothers about parenting. The home visits increased maternal responsiveness. At six years children who had the combined intervention were significantly taller than the other groups and the more malnourished children were most likely to benefit.

In a longitudinal study in Vermont, seven –in-hospital and four home teaching sessions were given to mothers on how to be responsive and how to adapt to their low birth weight infant. After 9 years these children were having

better academic performance and behaviour than low birth weight infants who were randomly selected not to get intervention.<sup>17</sup> Parents with the authoritative parenting style are assertive and at the same time reasonable.

In this study, authoritarian parenting style was associated with the internalizing problems like the emotionally reactive, anxious depressed and sleep problems. Similar findings of internalizing problem behaviour were seen in a study by Luma due to the authoritarian parenting style.<sup>18</sup> Authoritarian parents were forceful and have punitive discipline and has little communication with the child. So, these children grow negative thoughts and develop fear. Childhood internalizing problems has concerns for mental health due to their continuity into adolescence and associated functional impairment.<sup>19</sup>

In this study, permissive parenting style is associated with attention problems and aggressive behaviour and thus externalizing problems. Permissive parents have lax and inconsistent discipline and have a general ignorance of child misbehaviour and lack of self-confidence about parenting.<sup>13</sup> The lack of discipline may be the cause of aggressiveness and attention problems or may be because of the less parenting supervision or their attitude.<sup>20</sup> Sommer,<sup>21</sup> described that the permissive parenting style is associated with greater externalizing behaviour problems.

In this research with regression analysis it was revealed that different parenting styles predicted particular problem behaviours in children. Authoritative mother was found to be a significant predictor for lower or no behavioural problems. Results indicated that the authoritative parenting appeared as the most effective parenting with significant negative relationship with the behavioural problems. Authoritarian mother predicted internalizing problem behaviour and permissive mother predicted externalizing problem behaviour. The authoritarian parenting predicted internalizing problems like the emotionally reactive, anxious depressed and withdrawn problems and the permissive parenting style predicted externalizing problems like the aggressiveness and attention problems.

Multiple regression analyses of the sub factor of the parenting style revealed that the sub factors of the authoritative parenting style is not associated with behaviour problems except for the somatic complaints domain which is seen associated with the reasoning subscale. The emotionally reactive problem is associated with permissive parenting style and non-reasoning (punitive) sub factor of the authoritarian parenting style. The non-reasoning sub factor of the authoritarian parenting style is also a predictor of anxious/depressed, withdrawn and internalizing problems. The permissive parenting style is associated with attention problem, aggressive behaviour, and externalizing and total problem score.

This study signifies the magnitude of the influence of parenting styles on child's behaviour. Family centered intervention will improve the mental health of the children. This might be an important focus of future research. In developed countries intervention were more effective when it was given to needy population and was focused on specific

behavioural change in parents.<sup>22</sup> In our country interventions based on behavioural change of parents like boosting responsiveness should be integrated into the routine care of children.

## CONCLUSION

The different parenting styles were studied in this research. The parenting styles were studied along with the behavioural problems using CBCL 1½ -5 scores. Observations indicate that the authoritative parenting style is least associated with behavioural problems. Authoritarian parenting style is associated with internalizing problems and permissive parenting style is associated with externalizing problems in children. Since the behavioural problems tend to linger throughout life time, parental education and interventions will be helpful for the mental and physical well-being of children.

## Contributions-

JMA collected the data, conducted the study and prepared the manuscript and will be the guarantor of the paper. SSV supported the study, gave statistical support and reviewed the manuscript.

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