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## Parenting styles adopted by mothers of pre-school children according to child variables

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### Abstract

Parenting styles are defined as set of attitudes, beliefs and goals parents have and put into practice in their daily interactions with their children. Baumrind (1971) has mentioned three types of parenting styles viz., authoritative/democratic, authoritarian and permissive parenting styles. The present study was undertaken to know the parenting styles adopted by mothers of pre-school children. The study sample were mothers of 220 preschool children in Tirupati and Hyderabad towns where three types of pre-schools viz., laboratory nursery schools, anganwadi centers and private schools were available. Mothers were administered with Parenting Style Questionnaire. Results revealed that Majority of the mothers (60.9 per cent) were following authoritative parenting style. Parenting styles adopted by mothers did not differ significantly according to the gender of the child. Mothers differed significantly in exercising authoritarian and permissive parenting styles according to age of the child. Mothers differed significantly in exercising authoritarian and authoritative parenting styles according to the birth order of the children.

**Keywords:** Parenting styles, Child rearing practices, disciplinary practices

### Introduction

Parenting style refers to the normative patterns of behaviour and practices that parents use to socialize and control their children. Parenting style is a psychological construct representing standard strategies that parents use in their child rearing. Parenting practices are a way of expressing the parenting styles. Baumrind (1971) <sup>[1]</sup>, identified three methods of implementation of parenting styles.

**1. Authoritarian Parenting Style:** This term describes parents, who show low support, control their children, and demand them to follow specific rules. Lower responsiveness and higher demanding are two elements that describe authoritarian parenting.

**2. Authoritative Parenting Style:** Which refers to parents who are responsive, supporting, and attached to their children. Responsiveness and demanding are two elements that describe authoritative parenting. Parents who scored higher on both responsiveness and demanding are considered as authoritative parents. These parents demonstrate warmth and involvement with their children. They listen actively to their children and encourage them to make their own decisions.

**3. Permissive Parenting Style:** describes parents who exhibit behaviours that highly support their children and are very lenient to their children. High responsiveness and lack of demanding are two elements that describe permissive parenting. To assess whether parenting styles adopted by parents according to child's variables like age, gender, birth order and type of school the present study was conducted.

**Objectives:** The followings are the objectives of the study

- To know the parenting styles adopted by mothers of pre-school children
- To assess whether parenting styles adopted by mother differ according to gender of the child
- To assess whether parenting styles adopted by mother differ according to age of the child
- To assess whether parenting styles adopted by mother differ according to birth order of the child
- To assess whether parenting styles adopted by mother differ according to school child have attended

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**Methodology**

**Tools**

A tool was specially developed for present research purpose. Parenting Styles Questionnaire consists of two sections. section I includes General Information, Section II deals with questions related to three types of parenting styles viz, 1. Authoritarian, 2. Authoritative and 3. Permissive. The tool was standardized following techniques for establishing reliability and validly.

**Sample:** The sample of the study constituted mothers of 220 pre-school children (110 boys and 110 girls) who belonged to different types of pre-schools (Laboratory nursery school, Anganwadi center and Private schools) at Tirupati and Hyderabad. Who were selected using multi stage stratified random sampling technique.

**Data Collection**

Stratified random sampling technique was used to select then sample. In the first stage 5 Government schools (4 Anganwadi centers and one Laboratory nursery school) and 5 private schools were selected randomly from each area. In the next stage, children in the age group of 4+ years and 5+ years in

three types of schools were selected using stratified random sampling technique. Thus, 110 boys and 110 girls were identified from different settings of 20 schools from Tirupati and Hyderabad. The home addresses of these children were collected from school records. The investigator personally visited homes and established good rapport with the parents of the sample children. Parents were administered with Parenting Styles Questionnaire. The data obtained from final study was scored and suitable statistical analyses were performed.

**Results and discussion**

The data collected from the Parenting Styles Questionnaire was scored and based on the scores as per the scoring sheet the sample mothers were classified into three groups' viz., Authoritarian, Authoritative and Permissive. The mean scores obtained for three types of parenting styles adopted by mothers viz., Authoritarian, Authoritative and Permissive were 46.77 (SD=14.590), 55.04 (SD=12.743), 32.61 (SD=7.624) respectively. Based on the mean  $\pm$  1 SD again sample mothers under each category of parenting styles were divided into three groups ie., less authoritarian, moderate authoritarian and more authoritarian. Similarly mothers were classified under democratic/authoritative and permissive styles.

**Table 1:** Distribution of the Sample Mothers according to Different Parenting Styles

S. no	Type of Parenting Style		
	Authoritarian Style	Number	Per cent
1	Less authoritarian	105	47.7
2	Moderate authoritarian	59	26.8
3	More authoritarian	56	25.5
	Total	220	100.0
	<b>Authoritative Style</b>		
1	Less authoritative	22	10.0
2	Moderate authoritative	134	60.9
3	More authoritative	64	29.1
	Total	220	100.0
	<b>Permissive Style</b>		
1	Less Permissive	127	57.7
2	Moderate Permissive	80	36.4
3	More Permissive	13	5.9
	Total	220	100.0

From table 1 it is evident that parents displayed features of three types of parenting. When parenting styles implemented by mothers 47.7 percent of mothers were less authoritarian. Next to it, one fourth of mothers (26.6 per cent) were moderately authoritarian and 25.5 per cent were more authoritarian.

Authoritative parenting style is a more flexible style of parenting and majority of sample mothers (60.9 per cent of mothers) were found to be moderately authoritative. One third of mothers (29.1 per cent) were more authoritative and only 10

per cent of mothers were less authoritative.

Permissive style of child rearing is nurturing and accepting, but it avoids making demands or imposing controls of any kind. From table 7 it is known that more than half of the parents (57.7 per cent of mothers) were found to be less permissive. Whereas 36.4 per cent of mothers were moderately permissive. Very few mothers (5.9 per cent) were less permissive. Joseph and John (2008) reported that children of permissive parents tend to have good social skills but are more prone to problem behaviour.

**Table 2:** Mean Scores of Parenting Styles Adopted by Mothers according to Gender of the Child and t- values

S. No	Gender	Type of Parenting Styles					
		Authoritarian		Authoritative		Permissive	
		Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D
1	Boys N=110	46.49	14.321	56.37	12.648	33.03	6.653
2	Girls N=110	47.05	14.915	53.71	12.756	32.20	8.495
	Total N=220	46.77	14.590	55.04	12.743	32.61	7.624
	t. Value	0.079@		2.419@		0.647@	

From table 2 it is evident that the parenting styles adopted by mothers did not differ significantly according to the gender of the child. The t- values were not significant for three types of

parenting styles. The mean scores were more in authoritative (Mean 56.37, SD= 12.648) and more permissive (Mean 33.03, SD=6.653) parenting styles for both boys. However, an

observation of mean scores of parenting styles shows that sample mothers seemed to exercise authoritative type of discipline with their boy children than that of girls.

**Table 3:** Mean Scores of Parenting Styles Adopted by Mothers according to Age of the Child and t- values

S. No	Age of the Child	Type of Parenting Styles					
		Authoritarian		Authoritative		Permissive	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
1	4+Years (n=110)	44.45	14.250	54.94	13.072	34.45	8.656
2	5+ years (n=110)	49.08	14.622	55.15	12.463	30.78	5.922
	Total N=220	46.77	14.590	55.04	12.743	32.61	7.624
	t. Value	5.650* $P<0.05$		0.015@		13.422** $P<0.001$	

It is clear from the table 3 that mothers differed significantly in exercising authoritarian and permissive parenting styles according to age of the child. The t value for authoritarian was 5.650 and for permissive it was 13.322 and were significant at 0.05 level and 0.001 level respectively. The mean values show that as the age of the child increased from 4 years to 5 years,

mothers tend to be more authoritarian and less permissive. Dietz, (2000) [3] and Ghate *et al.*, (2003) [6] found that, the age of a child has been implicated in parental discipline responses and it was reported that with younger children tend to experience physical punishment more than older children.

**Table 4:** Mean Scores of Parenting Styles Adopted by Mothers According to Birth Order of the Child and f- values

S. No	Birth order of the children	Type of Parenting Styles					
		Authoritarian		Authoritative		Permissive	
		Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D
1	First Born n=105)	44.16	15.077	57.53	11.490	32.44	7.500
2	Second Born (n=95)	48.89	13.381	52.82	13.571	32.75	8.168
3	Third Born (n=20)	50.35	15.802	52.50	13.117	32.90	5.619
	Total N=220	46.77	14.590	55.04	12.743	32.61	7.624
	f. Value	3.358* $P<0.05$		3.951* $P<0.05$		0.056@ not significant	

Table 4 shows that mothers differed significantly in exercising authoritarian and authoritative parenting styles according to the birth order of the children, but did not differ in permissive type of parenting style. As the order of birth of the child increased mothers exercised more authoritarian and less authoritative parenting styles. The f value was significant at 0.001 level. Controversy to these findings of the present study,

in a study on disciplinary techniques used by parents according to birth order of child, reported that more strictness was observed with the eldest child in comparison to the later born. The reason may be due to difference in cultural background of study areas. Several researchers felt that culture plays a significant role in parental disciplinary practices.

**Table 5:** Mean Scores of Parenting Styles Adopted by Mothers according to Type of School and t- values.

S.No	Type of School	Type of Parenting styles					
		Authoritarian		Authoritative		Permissive	
		Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D
1	Government school (n=110)	44.58	13.379	56.36	13.461	32.04	7.865
2	Private school N=110	48.95	15.461	53.72	11.896	33.19	7.365
	Total N=220	46.77	14.590	55.04	12.743	32.61	7.624
	t. Value	5.031** $P<0.001$		2.385@ Not Significant		1.263@ Not Significant	

It is known from table 5 that mothers did not differ significantly in two types of parenting styles i.e., authoritative and permissive type, according to the type of schools child studied. The f values were not significant. However, mothers differed significantly in implementing authoritarian parenting style according to type of school. Mothers whose children were studying in private schools obtained more score in authoritarian parenting style (mean=48.95, SD=15.461) than those whose children were studying in Govt. schools (mean=44.58, SD= 13.379). The t value was 5.031 which was significant at 0.001 level. Generally parents of middle and above income group send their children to private schools. The results of the present study are in line with that of Elena *et al.*, (2014) [5] who while comparing the effect of parenting styles and competitiveness among mothers of preschool children, reported that parenting style of mothers of pre-school children from private schools was highly authoritarian and public schools was highly authoritative.

## Conclusions

From the results and discussions the following conclusions can be drawn

- Parenting styles adopted by mothers did not differ significantly according to the gender of the child.
- Mothers differed significantly in exercising authoritarian and permissive parenting styles according to age of the child.
- Mothers differed significantly in exercising authoritarian and authoritative parenting styles according to the birth order of the children

## Implications of the Study

The present study will be helpful to educate and create awareness among young parents to know about appropriate parenting styles and disciplinary techniques

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