

The Impact of Positive Parenting Practices on Children's Education and Behavioral Change

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Abstract

This article examines the relationship between positive parenting practices and heightened academic achievements and improved behavioural stability in children. This exploration underscores the pivotal role of parental practices in shaping a child's academic disposition and overall behavior within educational contexts. Examining this dimension within the specific cultural milieu of Pakistan, the study also considers the complementary role of teachers in this process. The study involves a sample of forty participants (n=40) selected from The University of Lahore, Pakistan. Utilising a Parenting Style Quiz and a Self-Constructed Questionnaire, the research assesses diverse parenting styles and the extent of parental engagement in their children's academic and social endeavors. The study's results highlight the prevalence of an authoritarian parenting approach among parents of adolescents, coupled with a lack of attentiveness towards their children's educational progress, which acts as a barrier to their educational advancement. The research underscores the need to embrace and propagate positive parenting initiatives, accompanied by the organisation of workshops within Pakistan. These endeavours aim to educate parents about effective child discipline methodologies and are poised to leave a favorable imprint on children's characters, thereby paving the way for their higher educational pursuits.

Keywords: *Positive Parenting, Parenting style, Educational growth, Cultural context*

Introduction

The importance of parenting style in child development has been acknowledged for a long time, ever since prototypical concepts were developed to distinguish between certain styles, such as authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive parenting styles (Carroll, 2021). Home and school are the two most essential components of an environment where children can reach their maximum potential. Numerous experts are currently focusing on how families affect the academic success of their offspring. Parental involvement in their children's education has numerous positive effects, including increased academic achievement and a more optimistic disposition among students. Active participation by parents in the school community results in improved academic and extracurricular performance for their children (Dittman et al., 2020; Robinson & Harris, 2014).

For the time being, longitudinal studies that make every effort to anticipate and account for other potential misunderstandings provide the strongest evidence of a causal connection between parenting styles

and the outcomes they are associated with. In one such study, parents of preschool-aged children were followed until early adolescence to determine their parenting approach (Clark & Frick, 2018; Baumrind et al., 2010).

After controlling for initial child differences, the study found that certain authoritarian-distinctive power-assertive behaviours, such as verbal hostility and psychological control, were the worst for children, while the most capable and well-adjusted children tended to have parents who were more democratic or authoritative (Sanders & Turner, 2018; Baumrind, 2012). Students with authoritative parents were more likely to have completed secondary education and less likely to have dropped out, after accounting for several other variables (Blondal & Adalbjarnardottir, 2009).

This association was demonstrated to be partially mediated by adolescent school engagement, highlighting the importance of healthy parent-child interactions for student-school engagement (Kuppens & Ceulemans, 2019; Blondal & Adalbjarnardottir, 2014). Therefore, there is sufficient evidence to conclude that a more authoritative and less authoritarian style may be causally associated with improved outcomes in children, as well as some evidence of the specific mechanisms or mediating factors underlying this association. Few research has been conducted on therapies that may be effective in altering parenting style or any of its identified beneficial or detrimental aspects.

According to Power and Franck (2008), parental involvement in their children's education and ongoing supervision may enhance their attitude. Most parents are unaware of the type of education their children receive in school or whether it conforms to societal norms. Children participate in diverse social interactions. These levels shape the characteristics of children, which influences their behaviour later in life.

Together, institutions and families can establish a relationship that benefits children. Education becomes a collaborative effort in which the value and influence of each partner are recognised and marked by mutual respect and trust. Even though instructors, parents, students, and institutions all benefit from their cooperation, the education process was enhanced (Amorim et al., 2020; Burns, 1993).

The purpose of this study is to replicate and extend previous findings in a population of predominantly low-income parents and community controls who attended free positive parenting practices training workshops (or community controls). Another significant innovation was the incorporation of new and detailed measurements, including both broad evaluations on parenting style and parent-reported assessments of their children's adaptive behaviour, broken down into many domains. Several of these categories, including academic proficiency and other forms of internalising and externalising behaviour, are theoretically directly related to parental style (Gould et al., 2018). The study will examine the following questions:

1. What is the impact of parental practices on the academic achievements and social behaviours of children?
2. What is the most used effective parenting style practice for higher secondary students?

The subsequent sections of this paper are organised as follows: The second section entails a comprehensive literature review encompassing both theoretical and empirical explorations. Following that, the third segment elucidates the methodology employed, while the fourth section unveils the outcomes of our inquiry. Finally, the paper concludes with deliberations, a summarising conclusion, and recommendations for future research.

Literature review

Parenting Style and Academic Achievement

Many research areas are focused on how parenting style affects academic achievement of the child. Research indicates that parents who exhibit a supportive and constructive mode of engagement in their children's scholastic endeavors are associated with offspring who exhibit enhanced self-assurance and manifest elevated levels of academic accomplishment. A positive style of parenting includes using encouraging comments, building healthy parent-child relationships, and using reinforcement instead of punishment (Prather & Golden, 2009). On the other hand, parents who use commands, strict rules, and inflexibility in their behavior, they often result in establishing weak relationship with their children and ultimately their children tend to show low academic achievement (Eyimaya & Irmak, 2021; Thomas & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2011).

Parental Involvement and Children's School Achievement

Garcia and Thornton (2014) suggest that involvement of families in learning of their children result in different positive aspects. Firstly, learners with high parental involvement tend to show better results. Secondly, they show improved social skills and positive behavior and approach towards their school. Parental involvement includes not only involvement by parents in their child's educational life but also, it includes how school involves parents and family to fulfill their roles in child's learning process (Amorim et al., 2020; Harris & Goodall, 2008). Parental involvement not only includes interacting with children daily but also includes helping them with their schoolwork, being a part of parent-teacher meetings and their extracurricular activities (Pek & Mee, 2020).

Llamas and Tuazon (2016) suggest that it becomes easier for parents to get involved in their child's academic life, when they are involved by the school in different activities. It enhances their level of comfort with school staff. Likewise, when children see their parents and family playing an active role in their school and learning, they show more commitment and interest in their school life (Francisco et al., 2020; Lemmer, 2007). Garcia and Thornton (2014) suggest that parental involvement results in improved behavior, low level of absenteeism and optimistic attitudes.

Positive Discipline is a method of child rearing based on the teachings of Alfred Adler and Rudolf Dreikurs, which emphasises the need for belonging as a fundamental human motivation (Gfroerer et al.,
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2013). A fundamental tenet of the approach is the notion that misbehaving children discourage children who have mistaken ideas (faulty private logic) about how to achieve their primary goal to belong (Sanders & Turner, 2018; Nelsen, 1999).

Positive Discipline places a great deal of emphasis on assisting parents and educators in recognising these erroneous beliefs that children may hold to implement a variety of targeted strategies to help children achieve their fundamental goal of feeling a sense of belonging. As an illustration, several key concepts are highlighted, including the use of encouragement (rather than praise) and the use of family and class meetings to resolve problems democratically, which fosters a sense of belonging and significance in children (Neece et al., 2020; Nelsen, 2006). The teaching of fundamental ideas using experiential methodologies, however, is what distinguishes the Positive Discipline model (2020) defined from other approaches and allows participants to "feel" what it is like to be on both sides of the approach as opposed to another. The strategy aims to produce effective discipline, which is defined as being long-lasting, mutually respectful, helps children feel connected, develops critical social skills, and gives kids a feeling of their own potential (Nelson, 2020).

Nelson (2009) stated that Positive Discipline may also assist parents in altering their parenting style from a permissive or authoritarian style to an authoritative style, despite the fact that its primary objective is to assist parents in achieving effective discipline. Many of the specific tools and methods advocated by Positive Discipline resemble or entirely overlap with existing parenting dimensions assessments, such as the Parenting Dimensions Questionnaire, as authoritative parenting style components (Gould et al., 2018; Robinson et. al, 1995).

Positive Discipline approaches and qualities are explicitly reflected in several of the scientifically derived elements that define four sub-dimensions of authoritativeness. For instance, the warmth/involvement component includes items such as "Gives praise when the child is good", "Gives comfort and understanding when the child is upset", and "Expresses affection by hugging, kissing, and holding the child". These are analogous to entire Positive Discipline techniques such as "give encouragement freely" and "give a hug". Positive Discipline clearly analogises each of the other sub-dimensions of an authoritative parenting style, such as Reasoning Induction ("take time for training"), Democratic Participation ("hold weekly family meetings"), and Good Natured/Easy Going ("look for improvement, not perfection") (Carroll, 2021). Similarly, the language of pleading also affects the psychology of good communication among individuals (Mokal & Ahmad, 2023). Accordingly, Positive Discipline appears to be an excellent example of the authoritative tone, at least as intended. The question that remains, however, is how effective a typical applied workshop is at modifying parental behaviour, and whether these changes have positive effects on children.

Existing research on Positive Discipline interventions has been limited thus far. This 12-week intervention involved both parents and instructors, and many of the techniques that are taught today had not yet

been developed. Jane Nelsen's 1979 dissertation provided the first trial of what would later become the foundation of Positive Discipline (Coyne et al., 2020; Nelsen, 1979). Other research has concentrated on the program's school-based applications. For example, Potter (1999) implemented class meetings, while Brown-ing et al. (2000) studied democratic problem-solving. One study, which was not centred on Positive Discipline explicitly, examined Adlerian-based parenting workshops in general, of which Positive Discipline is a sub-type. Parenting classes using positive discipline in their current, commonly utilised style have only been the subject of three studies (Carroll & Brown, 2020), and the results thus far are encouraging.

Holliday (2014) found that Positive Discipline parenting seminars increased authoritative parenting style (and decreased authoritarian and permissive styles) among relatively affluent participants. Even though it used different measures, a second study in a group with a considerably lower SES found that the seminars altered the attitudes and behaviours of parents (Tokatly Latzer et al., 2021; McNeal, 2014). In neither study did common variables such as socioeconomic status, race, or being a single parent appear to limit or moderate the effects (Carroll & Brown, 2020). Thus, if properly implemented, parenting courses could potentially reduce socio-developmental disparities and improve the long-term prospects of many children.

Methodology

The research is characterised by a quantitative approach, employing a descriptive methodology. At the commencement of the study, quantitative questionnaires were distributed among the participants. The research involved forty parents from the University of Lahore, encompassing parents of children aged between 12 and 18 years who fulfilled the inclusion criteria. The Active Parenting Publishers' (Michael H. Popkin) Parenting Style Quiz and a self-designed questionnaire were used to assess various parenting strategies and parental involvement in their children's academic and social lives, respectively. According to Gay and Airasian (2000), the use of a paper-and-pencil questionnaire has undeniable advantages over other data collection methods, such as interviews. This method was deemed more efficient, enabling data collection from a larger sample within a shorter timeframe and at a reduced cost. Initially, eighty participants were selected to complete the survey. Among them, fifty-two participants consented to participate, yielding a response rate of approximately 72%. Subsequently, twenty participants were excluded from the study, resulting in a final sample of sixty participants. Each participant completed a follow-up survey in person three months after the initial interaction. Out of the sixty participants, forty responses were received, accounting for a retention rate of nearly 60%. Out of the initial eighty participants, the usable sample comprised forty participants who provided primary outcome data at either timepoint. Despite the original sample size of 40 participants, accounting for attrition, the final participant count remained at 40 (n=40). The recruitment process is visually presented in Figure 1 for clarity and transparency.

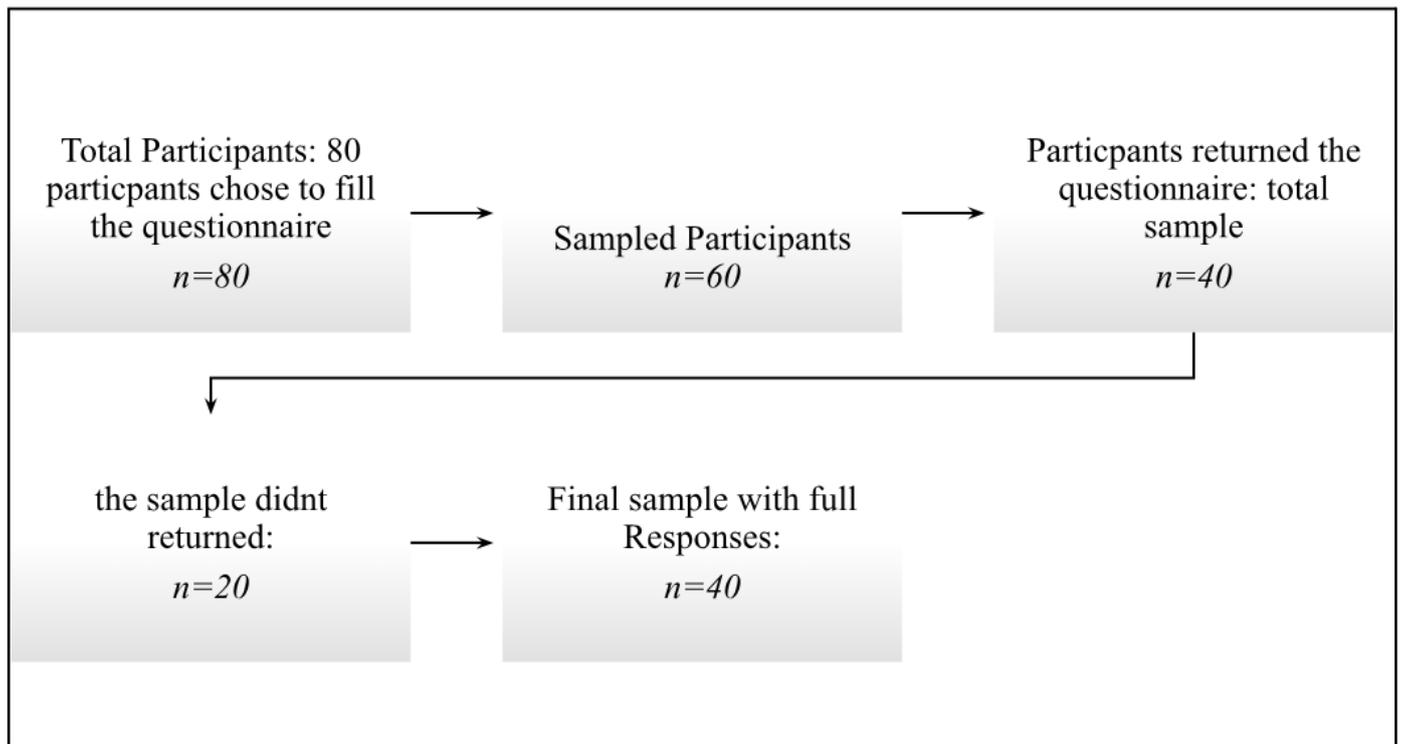


Figure 1: Distribution of study participants

Findings

The study's results projected an increase in authoritative parenting style, positive discipline parenting style, and parenting stress within the intervention group, while no such changes were observed in the control group. Conversely, the intervention group exhibited a decrease in authoritarian parenting style, permissive parenting style, and parenting stress, which was not mirrored in the control group. The research methodology employed a quantitative approach. Data analysis was conducted through Excel spreadsheets, with the outcomes utilised to delineate the demographic insights presented in Tables 1 to 7. Due to the extensive range of pertinent questionnaires, the outcomes of these analyses should be regarded as exploratory, and the implications of any deductions should be deemed preliminary. Nonetheless, these analyses are furnished to enhance the theoretical understanding of the findings and to guide forthcoming research endeavors.

The present study offers an examination of demographic characteristics alongside parenting style dynamics, shedding light on their intricate interplay. Table 1 serves as a comprehensive source of demographic data for both study groups at the initial timepoint. As depicted in Table 1, the initial cohort encompassed a total of 40 participants. Among this group, approximately 60% were identified as female, with the remaining 40% comprising males. Noteworthy is the fact that a significant proportion of participants reported holding co-parenting roles. In terms of educational attainment, the achieved levels closely mirrored the regional average. Interestingly, 60% of fathers and 40% of mothers were engaged in full-time employment. A distinct trend emerged with respect to unemployment rates.

Table 1: Demographics Characteristics of Participants.

Characteristics		<i>f</i>	%
Gender of the Child	Male	8	20
	Female	32	80
Gender of the Participant	Male	24	60
	Female	16	40
Family structure	Joint	28	70
	Nuclear	12	30
Education of father	16 years	24	60
	18 years	8	20
	≥18 years	8	20
Education of mother	16 years	16	40
	18 years	16	40
	≥18 years	8	20
	Work full time	40	100
Father's employment status	Doesn't work	-	-
Mother's employment status	Work full time	32	80
	Doesn't work	8	20

**f* = Frequency

Table 1 illustrates demographic characteristics of this study. 60% of the participants are fathers and 80% of them have female children. 70% of the participants belong to a joint family system. 60% of fathers have 16 years of education and are currently employed. 80% of mothers are employed.

Table 2: Basic Information regarding Child's Usage of Gadgets.

Variables		<i>f</i>	%
Child has TV in his/her bedroom	Yes	8	20
	No	32	80
Child has personal computer/laptop	Yes	35	87.5
	No	5	12.5

Mahvish Nawaz Mokal & Zaki Ahmad
The Impact of Positive Parenting Practices on Children's Education and Behavioral Change

Child has his/her personal mobile	Yes	37	92.5
	No	3	7.5
Duration of watching TV	≤ 30 minutes	8	20
	≤ 2 hours	14	35
	>2 hours	18	45
Duration of Mobile usage	≤ 30 minutes	5	12.5
	≤2 hours	13	32.5
	>2 hours	22	55
Duration of laptop/computer usage	≤ 30 minutes	4	10
	≤ 2 hours	9	22.5
	> 2 hours	27	67.5
Duration of playing video games	≤ 30 minutes	11	27.5
	≤ 2 hours	13	32.5
	> 2 hours	16	40

Table 2 shows basic information regarding a child's usage of gadgets. Most children have personal laptops and mobiles. The duration of watching TV, usage of mobiles, computers, and playing games is mostly greater than two hours.

Table 3: Distribution of Participants regarding their Parenting Style.

Variables	f (%)
Active/Authoritative Parenting	3(7.5)
Authoritarian Parenting	32(80)
Permissive Parenting	5(12.5)

Table 3 shows that 80% of the participants show authoritarian parenting style and very few show authoritative or permissive parenting style.

Table 4: Distribution of Participants regarding their Involvement in the Social Life of their Child.

Statements	Agree f (%)	Disagree f(%)
I talk to my child about his friends daily	4(10)	36(90)
I know about peer group of my child	5(12.5)	35(87.5)
My child talks about his concerns and fears with me.	3(7.5)	37(92.5)
My child shares if he faces any problem in his social life.	7(17.5)	33(82.5)
My child talks about his daily routine in school/college.	12(30)	28(70)

Table 4 shows the influence of parental involvement in the social life of children. According to the findings, 15.5% of participants demonstrated parental involvement in the social life of higher secondary children.

Table 5: Distribution of Participants regarding their Involvement in their School/Academic Life.

Statements	Agree f (%)	Disagree f(%)
My child shares with me if he faces any problems related to his studies.	12(30)	28(70)
I feel active participation in academic life of child is very crucial.	35(87.5)	5(12.5)
I feel role of teachers is crucial in developing child’s personality	40(100)	-
I talk to my child’s teacher on regular basis.	7(17.5)	33(82.5)

Table 5 shows the role of parental involvement in academic life of higher secondary children. Results show that 58.75% of the parents feel that parental involvement is important in the academic life of children whereas 17.5% of parents talk to their child’s teacher on a regular basis.

Table 6: Distribution of Participants regarding their Involvement in Social Media Usage for their Child.

Statements	Agree f(%)	Disagree f(%)
I have rules for my child regarding his/her social media usage.	7(17.5)	33(82.5)
I don’t compromise on rules regarding social media usage of my child.	12(30)	28(70)
I feel my child is less social due to excessive social media usage.	7(17.5)	33(82.5)
I feel my child can perform better if his social media usage is reduced.	35(87.5)	5(12.5)
I think my child is spending more time on social media usage than on his studies.	38 (95)	2(5)

Table 6 illustrates 49.5% parents show parental involvement in social media usage of higher secondary children. 95% of parents feel that their children spend more time on social media than on their studies.

Table 7: Correlation of Authoritarian Parenting and Academic Achievement of Students.

Variables	Authoritarian Parenting	Academic Achievement
Authoritarian Parenting	-	-.62*
Academic Achievement	-	-

Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to find out the relationship of authoritarian parenting style and academic achievement of higher secondary children. It shows that higher authoritarian style leads to low academic performance.

Discussion

This study aimed to explore common parenting styles and the level of parents' involvement in their children's school and social lives. It builds upon previous research (Amorim et al., 2020; Sanders & Turner, 2018; Clark & Frick, 2018) which mostly focused on understanding how different ways of parenting impact how well children do in school. This study aimed to clarify the key aspects that support these parenting methods. These aspects include parents being there for their children, setting goals, passing on values, and keeping a watchful eye.

Important findings shed light on how young people today use technology. For instance, a large majority (87.5%) of the group had their own laptops, and even more (92.5%) owned mobile devices. They spent quite a bit of time watching TV, using phones and computers, and playing games—often more than two hours. However, when it comes to parents getting involved in their teenagers' social lives, like with their friends and activities, only a small portion (15.5%) of parents are actively engaged. Consistent with earlier studies (Asbury et al., 2021; Lange et al., 2019), the results show that when parents know who their teenagers' friends are, it tends to help their school performance. Many parents (58.75%) think that being part of their children's school life is important, but only a few (17.5%) really take action. This matches with earlier research (Collins et al., 2022; Romero et al., 2020) that noticed a decrease in parents' involvement as teenagers grow up, as Crosnoe suggested in 2001.

In line with this trend, a connection between children getting older and parents being less involved in school-related activities can be seen. This could be partly because schools change as children move up in grades, offering fewer chances for parents to be involved. Importantly, teenagers' growing need for inde-

pendence also plays a role, supported by studies from Fan and Chen in 2001, leading to reduced parent involvement.

This study also sets the stage for future research. It suggests exploring how much parents should be involved during the teenage years, considering that different personalities and temperaments play a role. Additionally, the study finds interesting patterns regarding technology use. Nearly half of parents (49.5%) keep an eye on their teenagers' social media, and a big majority (95%) feel that their children spend more time on social media than on schoolwork.

Finally, the study reveals different parenting styles. A lot of parents (80%) tend to be strict or "authoritarian", while some (32%) are more relaxed or "permissive", and only a few (3%) strike a balance or are "authoritative". The study shows that strict parenting is linked to lower school performance, which matches with what earlier studies have found. This means that when parents are very strict and don't listen to their children, it can affect how well they do in school. This agrees with earlier research that also talks about problems with strict parenting.

The study's results underscore the significance of parenting styles and parental involvement in shaping children's academic and social lives. They emphasise the need to understand how these factors evolve as children grow and how they interact with modern technological trends. The findings provide a foundation for future research to examine these dynamics and their impacts on adolescent development.

Conclusion and future recommendations

The paper examined how positive parenting practices resulted in higher student achievement among children and helped them develop better and more stable behavior. Parental involvement in their children's life is crucial in every stage of a child's life. However, the findings of current study reveal that parental involvement has declined as children tend to grow and reach the age of adolescence. Parents tend to use strict and inflexible style of parenting that result in disobedience from their children and decline in academic performance. Parents also feel helpless regarding the use of social media of their children and their lack of control over them. Overall, the study's results show the importance of parenting styles and parental involvement in children's school and social lives. They suggest a need to understand how these things change as children grow and how they fit with modern technology. It also suggests creating awareness regarding positive parenting practices to masses of the society so that healthy parent-child relationships can be developed. This will ultimately result in a healthy society. Current study was limited to one institute; however, future research should explore other professionals and masses of society.

Author contributions

MNM: Conceptualization; Exploration; Methodology; Project administration; Resources; Supervision; Validation; Writing-review and editing. ZA: Conceptualization; Writing-review and editing; Methodology; Exploration.

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Data availability statement

The participants of this study did not give written consent for their data to be shared publicly, so due to the sensitive nature of the research supporting data is not available.

Conflicts of interest

Authors declare no conflict of interest.

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Mahvish Nawaz Mokal & Zaki Ahmad
The Impact of Positive Parenting Practices on Children's Education and Behavioral Change

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