

RESEARCH ARTICLE

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A Qualitative Insight into Parental Styles and Their Outcomes: A Content Analysis Study

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Abstract

Background: The infancy and early childhood stages are pivotal in human development, marked by significant developmental milestones and the formation of personality traits. Parenting style plays a central role in shaping children's lives and their cognitive and emotional growth. This research endeavor is directed towards providing a comprehensive overview of the prevailing trends in parenting styles research while identifying the specific domains that have been the subject of scholarly investigation to date. The outcomes of this study are anticipated to offer valuable insights into the prevailing perspectives and understandings within the domain of parenting styles.

Methods: This study conducted an analysis of empirical research and examined prevailing trends in parenting as documented in scientific journals within the Scopus database for the period spanning 2013 to 2017. A rigorous content analysis was undertaken to explore research studies specifically related to parenting styles. After a thorough review of content and research methodologies, a total of 220 articles were identified as aligning with the research objectives of this study. The primary purpose of this analysis was to pinpoint gaps within the existing literature, which will inform the direction of our future research endeavors.

Results: The results indicated a substantial number of published articles addressing parenting styles, reflecting the importance of these styles in shaping an individual's character and temperament. However, there has been limited exploration of the intricate factors contributing to both effective and ineffective parenting styles. Much of the research has primarily focused on the dynamics between parents and their children, neglecting to delve into the viewpoints of parents themselves and the life experiences that have impacted and molded them.

Conclusions: The conclusions underscore the necessity of investigating the factors that influence parents' personalities and recommend the development of interventions aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of parenting. These efforts, in turn, are expected to contribute to the psychosocial well-being and prosperity of individuals.

Keywords: Parenting, parental styles, parent-child relation, content analysis

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Background

Across the human lifespan, early childhood is widely recognized as a pivotal and demanding phase for both parents and their offspring (Haslam et al., 2020; Kopko, 2007; Kuppens & Ceulemans, 2019). Research has emphasized that during this period, children undergo a multitude of developmental transitions encompassing physical, social, emotional, and cognitive domains, extending from childhood through adolescence and into adulthood. Effective parenting during these formative years necessitates a comprehensive comprehension of the developmental transformations experienced by children. A significant aspect of this comprehension involves an awareness of one's parenting style. Such awareness not only benefits parents but also serves as a foundational element for fostering the healthy psychological growth of children. This, in turn, facilitates their successful navigation through the various developmental phases, ultimately contributing to the cultivation of robust personalities during adolescence (Haslam et al., 2020; Kopko, 2007; Kuppens & Ceulemans, 2019).

Parenting Style

As described by Spera in 2005, parental practices refer to the specific actions and behaviours that parents employ to interact with and guide their children. On the other hand, parenting style refers to the emotional environment or atmosphere in which parents raise and nurture their children (Spera, 2005).

Parenting can be described using two key dimensions: responsiveness and demandingness. Responsiveness refers to the extent to which parents actively support and accommodate their child's individuality, self-control, and self-expression by being understanding and responsive to their needs. On the other hand, demandingness relates to the parents' endeavors to foster their children's integration into the family unit through monitoring and addressing disobedience when it occurs (Balantekin et al., 2020; Baumrind, 1991; Buri, 1991).

Previous studies have shown a keen interest in how parents interact with and guide their children. These studies have primarily focused on two aspects of parenting behavior: warmth and control (Dance-Schissel, 2015; Rouzi et al., 2020). Parental control encompasses the extent to which parents seek to manage their children's behavior, ranging from being highly controlling to setting few rules and demands. Conversely, parental warmth relates to how parents accept and respond to their children's actions, in contrast to being dismissive or unresponsive. When these two aspects of parenting behavior are considered together, they give rise to three main parenting styles, as proposed by Baumrind:

1. Authoritarian parenting, which expects and emphasizes unquestioning obedience from children, often relying on punishments or the withdrawal of parental affection for control.
2. Permissive parenting, characterized by a reluctance to impose rules on children and a focus on providing emotional support.
3. Authoritative parenting, seen as a balanced approach that emphasizes certain behavioral standards while also encouraging children to think independently and develop their own autonomous identities (Baumrind, 1971; Buri, 1991).

Subsequently, other researchers introduced a fourth parenting style known as uninvolved parenting. In this style, parents fail to establish clear standards or rules for their children. Unlike permissive parenting, uninvolved parenting lacks warmth and nurturing. While basic needs such as food and shelter are provided, emotional support and affection are often lacking (Maccoby & Martin, 1983; Yaffe, 2020).

Research on Parental Styles

Throughout literature, authoritative parenting has been advocated as the best parenting style for children (Aqeel et al., 2020; Steinberg, 2001). Authoritative parenting is associated with healthy child development, and it provides a balance between affection and support and an appropriate level of control in the management of children's behavior. This parenting style creates an atmosphere that provides opportunities for the children to rely on themselves and develop an autonomous self within the established parental boundaries and rules (Kopko, 2007; Tahira & Jami, 2021).

Although an authoritative parenting style is related to constructive developmental outcomes, many times a mix of parenting styles is used. For example, a parent may be permissive in allowing a weekend sleepover at a friend's house but more authoritarian in disallowing their teenage child to ride in the car with friends. Parents can modify their style in different situations. Parenting styles also vary from parent to parent; one parent might be authoritative while the other parent could be authoritarian.

Like many other areas, research on parenting styles is also subjected to the nature-nurture debate (Gorostiaga et al., 2019). Nurture-based developmental psychologists place too much emphasis on parenting style and its impact on a child's well-being (Steinberg, 2001; Steinberg et al., 2016). On the other hand, behavioural geneticists are more interested in the factors that children inherit from their parents. Many researchers have tried to study the differences in children's behaviour and personalities despite being

raised in similar environments (Collins & Margo, 2000).

An important relationship between authoritative parenting and healthy developmental outcomes has been observed, but several factors such as lack of sleep, stress, mood, job responsibilities, etc. highlight the need for further investigation into the matter. Individual characteristics, such as personality and temperament, are also important factors to be studied with respect to parenting, as they also play a part in parenting behavior (Smetana, 2017; Spera, 2005). An extensive amount of work has been done on parenting styles because of the broadness of this concept. Still, further research is needed to understand its various constituents and impacts. The goal of this study is to look at researched parenting style trends and how they affect children's well-being later in life. Research studies on parenting styles that had been published in academic journals from 2012 until 2017 were investigated by the year of publication, the analysis used in the study, the study sample, and the country of the study. As parenting has a high impact on the personality development of an individual, the results of this research may enhance our understanding of related perceptions in the field. It will also elaborate on individuals' developmental processes studied during that time period. It will also highlight the gaps in the present literature.

Method

Content analysis was performed on the topic of parenting styles addressed in various scientific journals. The primary goal of this study was to summarize the trends in parenting styles research and highlight the areas of parenting style research that have so far been covered. The findings of this study will help us understand how people perceive parenting styles and their consequences.

Data Set

The data set included abstracts of parenting-style articles published in scientific journals between January 2013 and May 2017. Using the electronic resource of the SCOPUS database, there were found to be 220 articles within the specified time frame on parenting styles. Only journal articles were included in the study, while editorials, reviews, memorials, etc. were excluded for the purpose of analysis.

Abstracts were collected and manually coded by the author. Both inductive and deductive coding approaches were used for this purpose. The main goal of using the inductive approach is to allow research findings to emerge from the most occurring, significant, and dominant patterns that were inherent in the raw data, without any restraints imposed by structured methodologies (Harding et al., 2017; Ritchie et al., 1994), while deductive coding was used based on the theoretical framework

and on previous research done on parental styles (Chauhan, 2022; Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009).

Results

The data consisted of 46 articles abstracts from 2012-2013 (21%), 52 from 2014 (24%), 51 from 2015 (23%), 54 from 2016 (25%) and 17 abstracts (7.7%) from 2017 ($n = 220$). The results showed that every year the number of articles published on the topic keeps on increasing. Most research articles were seen to be published in 2016 and the least articles were published in 2017, probably because only first 4 months of 2017 were part of the study.

Research Design

In research design, coding was done utilizing the categories outlined by the American Psychological Association (APA, 2009). Abstracts mentioning quantitative means to collect data, its numerical measurement and analyses was included in the quantitative study category. Those abstracts having unstructured interviews, participant observation or any other means of understanding the subjective experiences of the individual were coded as a qualitative study (Bowman & Swart, 2007). In case of both qualitative and quantitative means of data collection and analysis, abstracts were added in the category of mixed research design.

Most of the articles were quantitative in nature (44.5%; $n = 98$); 35.9 % were qualitative ($n = 79$) and mixed method researches were the least in number, that is, 19.5% ($n = 43$).

Participants

The majority of the research articles (89.5 %) included both male and female participants ($n = 197$). Only 6.4% ($n = 14$) of the studies included all females while 4.1% ($n = 9$) included only male samples in the research.

Study participants between the ages of 13 to 22 were labelled as adolescents, those who were older than 22 years old were labelled as adults and researches that included both age categories were termed as mixed age group. 70.9% of the researches had adult study sample ($n = 156$), 19.5% of the studies used an adolescent sample ($n = 43$) while 9.5% used a mixed age group ($n = 21$).

Research Trends

After carefully examining the researches included in this study, keywords were extracted. Keywords and related concepts were grouped and condensed into broad content categories (Table 1) as listed below:

- *Academic achievement* (49%) comprised of performance and accomplishments related to education.
- *Authoritative parenting* (35%) mentioned authoritative parenting style and its impact on behavior.

- *Mental health and welfare (65%)* represented well-being, adaptation, psychopathology, emotional regulation and viewpoint.
- *Physical health and growth (43%)* having injuries, accidents, burns, other medical conditions and developmental disorders.
- *Family atmosphere (60%)* referred to the ways parents and children interact with each and the effect of home environment on the psychological and physical health of children.
- *Behavior of Children (35%)* has all the behavioral strategies learned from interacting with parents.
- *Sexual behavior (4%)* included adolescents' attitudes towards gender and sexual behaviors due to parental modeling.
- *Social competence and peer relationships (39%)* included social skills, attachment and interaction with their peers demonstrating how they exhibit warmth and handle conflict.
- *Drug use (13%)* referred to parents modeling inappropriate drug-using behavior or creating a psychological environment in which children become more susceptible to substance use and drinking.
- *Cognition (14%)* included all those environmental factors structuring children's cognitive abilities.
- *Aggression and delinquent behavior (46%)* included the quality of relationship parent and child have is related to aggression, delinquency, anger, truancy and antisocial behaviors.
- *Depression, anxiety and internalizing disorders (57%)* contained all the depressive, anxious and other internalizing problems such as somatic complaints indicative of parent and child relationship.
- *Self-esteem and self-identity (63%)* included positive self-view and identity, locus of control, and other related concepts.
- *Personality and motivation (52%)* included those aspects related to aspirations and motivation and where parents acting as role models, providing and selecting opportunities for the children, and setting expectations and definitions of success for children effecting their personality characteristics.

Discussion

The research studied the articles related to parental styles that were published from 2012 till 2017. SCOPUS data base was utilized for this

purpose. English language was the predominant one (89%) while Spanish (3%), Portuguese (2%) and other languages (6%) were less in number comparatively. Past few years had seen researches conducted in many other foreign languages, that is, Turkish, German, Spanish, etc. which reflected the increase interest on the topic across various cultures. While investigating the results, it was seen that the published documents' content is highly influenced by the increasing awareness and work done on parental styles, this was also consistent with yearly high published articles. Increased interest among parents and researchers to understand was also highlighted.

The vast amount of studies on parental styles were carried out in Australia, Europe and United States. Other countries like Ethiopia, Hungary, Indonesia, Kuwait, Pakistan, Philippines, Serbia, United Arab Emirates, Tanzania, etc. showed just few published researches within the past five years emphasizing the lack of interest and awareness regarding effective parenting and its impact.

Results also indicated methodological trends such as quantitative methods were mostly utilized to conduct researches. This also highlights the underrepresentation of qualitative or mixed methods which may advocate contextually bound, critical or interpretive views, and the continued dominance of qualitative choices.

Quality of parent and child relationship has been associated with a wide variety of behavior outcomes in later years of life. After examining the articles included in the study, it has been observed that children of parents exhibiting conflicted, harsh parenting behaviors; also demonstrated high levels of delinquent or antisocial behaviors. However, consistent with previous research findings, it has also been observed that different sorts of problem behaviors cluster within single individuals. For instance, a person's behavioral and emotional problems often seems to coexist. High level of aggression were linked with higher levels of depression, anxiety as well as academic struggles (Haslam et al., 2020; Kopko, 2007; Kuppens & Ceulemans, 2019; Tahira & Jami, 2021).

Large-scale clinical and normative developmental studies have stated that there are strong links between depression, anxiety, internalizing problems and parent-child interaction (Schnabel et al., 2020; Wood, 2003). The results of this study also concludes that these associations are present. Several studies (Hudson & Rapee, 2002; Pettersson et al., 2020) have also suggested that children's internalizing behaviors have been associated with parenting styles such as over-protectiveness.

Several cognitive theorists stated the relationship between parent and child in an environment where the cognitive abilities if the child can flourish (Rogoff & Lave, 1984).

Table 1*Research Trends of the study*

<i>Topic Trends</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
1. Academic achievement	108	49
2. Authoritative parenting	78	35
3. Mental health and welfare	142	65
4. Physical health and growth	94	43
5. Family atmosphere	132	60
6. Behavior of Children	78	35
7. Sexual behavior	09	4
8. Social competence and peer relationships	87	39
9. Drug use	29	13
10. Cognition	31	14
11. Aggression and delinquent behavior	101	46
12. Depression, anxiety and internalizing disorders	126	57
13. Self-esteem and self-identity	138	63
14. Personality and Motivation	115	52

Parents being mindful and aware of the importance of the cognitive abilities nurturance try to provide an atmosphere where the child can flourish and further his/her own motivation. Parents also can serve as role models to the by giving them opportunities and communicating expectation (Schnabel et al., 2020; Wood, 2003). There is considerable research findings that establish clear link between parent–child interaction and cognitive or academic outcomes of the child. The current research also showed that high level of academic performance is linked more with authoritative parenting than other parenting styles (Glasgow et al., 1997).

Peer relationship quality is also believed to be arbitrated by social cognitions and behaviors learned as a result of social interactions with parents. Researches based on social learning theories also emphasized parental monitoring and control to play a role in preventing the children from developing deviant behaviors (Aqeel et al., 2016; Durbin et al., 1993; Gorostiaga et al., 2019).

Many other researches also supported the findings that stated children having warm, supportive and authoritative relationships tend to show more positive self-concept regarding academics, social relationships, romantic relationships, athletics, etc. (Gunnore et al., 2006; Harter & Pike, 1984).

Many other researches have also proved links between the quality of relationships parents and children have and unhealthy and risky behaviors like drug or alcohol use and sexually risky behaviors. Many pediatric researches too have shown that smoking parents are more likely to have children who will end up having smoking habit (Pratt et al., 1992). Enough researches have shown that drug and alcohol use may be passed on by genes (Pratt et al., 1992). Another explanation could be that parents are models whose behaviors children learn by observation and modeling, thus it create an environment in which children are more prone to drug or alcohol use (Glasgow et al., 1997; Steinberg, 2001; Steinberg et al., 2016).

Conclusion and Suggestion

In short, considerable consistency has been found across various studies pertaining to the connection between parent and child relationship outcomes and its quality. Many previous research studies have concluded a similar view (Collins & Margo, 2000). Certain associations between different dimensions of parenting and its particular outcomes in a magnitude of research literature and consensus of these associations, though unclear, have been found. There were indicators that certain dimensions of parenting style may play an important role in some outcomes, for instance overprotective parent may reinforce anxiety and controlling parents may give rise to delinquent behaviors. Further studies ought to adopt a single facet of parenting as

their main focus of study to be better able to specify the study outcomes.

Dataset Availability Statement

The dataset generated and used in this research can be acquired from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors have no conflicts of interest.

Ethical Statement

A qualitative study was conducted on already-available data. Ethical approval was obtained from the Scientific Research Ethics Committee of Near East University, North Cyprus. The procedure used in this research followed the tenets of the Near East University's Board of Trustees ethics mandate.

Informed Consent

Content analysis on the available research results was carried out ensuring no results have been changed or mentioned otherwise.

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Ethical Consideration

The study was approved by Faculty of Economics, Administrative and Social Sciences, Nisantasi University, Turkey. Consent Form was taken before taking data and participants were asked to take voluntary participation.

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Availability of data and materials

The data sets used and analyzed during the current study are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

Authors' contributions/Author details

Maryam Farzand performed this study with collaboration of Yagmur Cerkez, Engin Baysen, and Meerub Nisar.

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Ethics declarations

Ethics approval and consent to participate

This study was approved by the Institutional Review Board of Faculty of Economics, Administrative and Social Sciences, Nisantasi University, Turkey. A written informed consent was obtained from all participants.

Consent for publication

Not applicable.

Competing interests

The authors declare to have no competing interests.

Additional Information

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