

## The relationship between parenting styles and the educational achievement

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**Abstract:** The purpose of the present research is to study the relationship between different parenting styles (authoritarian, autocratic, and permissive) and the educational achievement of students. For that matter, a sample of 262 people has been chosen amongst male and female students at the first grade of theoretical high schools in the city of Karaj, through the multi-stage cluster sampling method. The necessary data has been collected by the use of measuring tools like the parenting style questionnaire of Diana Baumrind (1971). The validity and reliability of the mentioned questionnaires was confirmed. The results of multivariable regression analysis, obtained through the simultaneous method, had indicated that there was a meaningful and positive relationship observed between the authoritarian parenting style and the academic achievement, and there is not a relationship observed between the two other styles (autocratic and permissive) and the educational achievement. Also, there is a meaningful difference the educational achievements of male and female students, which was clarified through the statistical test for the independent mean differences (the independent t).

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### 1. Introduction

Family is of important and fundamental institutions of society and has a significant role in the life of the individual and society. The importance of family as a social institution is an indisputable matter. Although children are influenced by the society and their peers, they are mostly influenced by the family. The family influence on the child and its important roles in terms of construction, culture, society, morality, etc. are very significant. The family influence on comprehensive growth of children has started since the moment of birth, and it becomes known through a particular power of learning and remains throughout the lifetime.

The righteous and moderate relationship between parents and children is one of the effective factors on their mental health. The researches indicate that the mutual impression of the parents and the child, how they act towards each other and their relationship are considered the most important and fundamental factors amongst different factors affecting the nurture and healthy personality in children and adolescents.

On the other hand, the educational achievement is a subject which is particularly of interest to every country in the world, and a considerable amount of budget is spent on the education of children and adolescents in societies every year. The statistics by UNESCO indicate that the total expenses of governments for education in the developing countries exceeded 8 billion dollars in 1965 and reached over 92 billion dollars in 1980. That's because students' educational achievement is one of the most important and objective criteria to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the

education systems, and all the efforts by these systems are to bring this matter about.

According to Baumrind's theory (1991), parenting styles act as mediators between their normative variables and socialization of children while having relationships with social competencies. Moreover, Querido, Warner, and Eyberg (2002) had indicated that the authoritarian parenting style with organization, educational achievement, and intellectual orientation in children had positive relationships. Researches have also shown that teenagers who have dictator parents are less self-reliant and can't do anything on their own or have the opinion of their own. Perhaps that is because they didn't have enough chance to test their own opinions or to take responsibility independently (Alder, 1980; Loeis, 1982).

Plus, these teenagers bear less self-confidence, independence, and creativity. They do not possess a curious mind. They have grown less in terms of moral development. They have less flexibility while dealing with routine practical, educational, and mental problems (Gongro and Piterson, 1984; J. and Alder, 1980).

Family involvement in education can also predict school achievement. Researches have been conducted on education and evolution. They had indicated that parents' viewpoint, interactive approaches, and behavior, alongside their relationship with school, are connected with social evolution and educational performance of the child (Kerstnon and Sheridan, 2001).

Family can play a very effective role due to its educational and cultural position in fostering thoughtful, aware, and thriving human beings. If the

dimensions of this educational institution are correctly analyzed, it will be clear that the health and dynamism of the society relates to those of the family. Of the social factors, parents and family system have the most prominent effect on the person's identity and how it is shaped. As the majority of experts consider the individual's impressibility of the family undeniable and see the family as the most important institution in shaping the identity of the children. In this regard, Adams (1985) inferred that the parents could facilitate the positive growth of identity or postpone in.

Parents' educational successes make them more capable of helping their children study. This matter bears high importance in high school period. Yet, it is difficult to determine how parents who pay no attention to the educational activities of their children can make them interested in doing school homework (Steinberg, 1966). When parents show their interest in school homework and doing it, teenagers find out that what they do is important. Psychologists in most years of the current century emphasized on the relationship between children and those who have the responsibility of taking care of them and considered these mutual interactions as the basis of logical and reasonable growth. During the culmination of behaviorism in America in the years 1910 to 1920, children-nurturing experts considered the infant as an object which can be shaped and conditioned systematically.

The emotions and requirements of the child or parents, possible changes in the genetic talents, and the temporary characteristics of the child were not taken into account much in that period. Watson advised parents not to satisfy and spoil the children by hugging and kissing, but to behave toward them in a reasonable way and like teenagers, and to leave them alone to cry how much ever they want, instead of hugging them and shaking them to get calm, and not to enhance their indecent behavior. Benyamin Speck advised parents to follow their natural instincts and use the flexible programs which were compatible with the requirements of both themselves and their children. Nowadays with the development of communities and their negative growth, the child-centered discussion has emerged and recommended that parents behave in favor of the children's will and provide them with whatever they wanted. However, more permissive approaches emerged from early 1930 to middle 1960. According to them, parents were advised to pay more attention to the child's emotions and talents. This change is to some extent because of the Freudian psychological impact and its emphasis on the role of limitations and deprivations at younger ages in mental restraining dimensions in children, which can be the source of many emotional

problems. Parenting styles mean the methods parents apply to nurture their children. Mainrosint (1997) knows parenting styles as a set of chained behaviors which shows the child-parent interaction on a particular spectrum and creates inclusive interaction. The emotional atmosphere of a family is the way of communicating with and acting toward the members of that family. Family members' impressions of one another, the feelings and love they have for one another, how to intervene or not to intervene in other members' affairs, and cooperation or competition with one another show the way they communicate.

Parenting style is the way according which the child is grown at home, and it can affect the child's performance at school (Steinberg, 1992). Baumrind (1992), Gatman and Diklayer (1997) believe that good parenting is vital. Some believe that the only thing which is necessary for most children is an average, predictable environment. Some others believe that parents bear no major significance for growing the children (Mareis, 1998). This group argues that only the genetic factors and peers are important in the life of the child.

It should be mentioned that although the genetic factors and peers are effective on growth, parents have an influence beyond what the above approach believes. The results of the research indicates the active role of parents in planning, beginning, maintaining, and monitoring the friendship of children with their peers have a relationship with the outcomes of social development in different social circumstances (Mars *et al.*, 1998).

Parenting styles include many goals which change in different steps of a child's life. As it is shown in table 1, the goals of parenting styles change in different steps alongside the change in the steps of mental development (age).

**Table1: The change in the steps of mental growth and parenting styles**

Age Period	Erickson's Stages of Mental Growth	The Main Goals of Parenting Styles
Infancy(from birth to 18 months)	Basic Trust VS. Mistrust	Meeting the Needs of children
Toddler(from 18 months to 3 years)	Autonomy VS. Shame and Doubt	Controlling children's behavior
Early childhood(from 3 to 5 years)	Innovations VS. Guilt	Nurturing Autonomy
Middle childhood(from 6 to 11 years)	Usefulness VS. Inferiority	Encouraging development (e.g. school)
Adolescence(from 11 to 13 years)	Identity VS. Confusion	Encouraging individuality or continuing relationships

The dimensions of child-parent relationships, according which many children's behaviors are shaped, has a large variety.

For example:

- 1- Sheifer mentions two dimensions of parental warmth and control, each against coldness and freedom.
- 2- Maccoby E. E. and Martin P. (1984), quoted by Darling (1999), mention two dimensions of parental reaction (acceptance and rejection) and parental expectation (controlling or letting free).
- 3- Maxille (2001) mentions two dimensions of kindness and spirituality.
- 4- Freud specifies two dimensions of acceptance and control for parenting styles.

It must be said that all of these dimensions overlap with each other, but the interactions and relationships between parents and children are generally specified and defined in three dimensions of parenting styles, and two of these dimensions are parental reactions and expectations, while the third one is parental commitment and collaboration (Brent, 1997).

The results of researches conducted by Dine (1998), Shafer (1987), and Donaleh (1994) have also confirmed and indicated that the authoritarian method is the most effective one. Authoritative parents convey a feeling of constant love to their children, a feeling which encourages the child to behave in accordance with the mental realities of the parents. But neglecting parents are not like this. They coordinate their expectations exactly with their children's capabilities and give them some freedom to decide how to meet those expectations (Shafer, 1997). It must be said that the advantages of authoritarian parenting style is obvious in the years of pre-elementary school and early childhood and continues until adolescence and adulthood (Darling, 1999). It seems that if democratic and determinative parenting styles are accompanied by some explanations about parental circumstances and expectations, it can develop independence with responsibility in teenagers in many aspects.

The authoritarian parenting style is useful for every family and society, given its features and frameworks (Shafer, 1999). Amongst all the ethnic and racial groups studied in the US, there was a relationship between trusty and determined (authoritarian) parenting style and the positive growth outcomes of children. Although all the research conducted in this realm in recent years show a significant growth whose reasons can be mentioned as the increasing importance of this matter in the

communities, interest of researchers to study human relations, and providing psychologically related scales, most of the researches relates to maternal nurturing methods and the childhood, while adolescence is paid less attention to. On the other hand, family is a cultural, social, and environmental variable which has a domineering effect on most of the psychological-educational processes. Knowing these variables and studying them is also important and essential, so it is worth doing more research in this realm. Therefore, given the results indicating the importance in this research and the effect of parenting styles on the educational achievement, the researcher is trying to answer the question whether there is a relationship between parenting styles and the educational achievement or not. In other words, the main purpose of this research is to study the relationship between parenting styles and the education achievement of students.

## 2. Material and Methods

Given the fact that the main purpose of this research is to study the relationship between parenting styles and the educational achievement, the method is of correlational and descriptive studies which use traversal collecting method.

### 1.2. Population and Sample

The statistical population includes all the male and female students who were studying at the first grade of high school in the city of Karaj in the academic year 90-91. A sample of 262 subjects was selected out of the total number. The method of choosing the sample is the multiple-stage cluster sampling one. First, 3 regions were chosen amongst the high school out of 4 regions. Then, 2 female and 2 male high schools were chosen out of each region. After that, 2 classes were chosen out of the selected high schools. Finally, 15 to 16 students were chosen out of each class at random, and they were given the parenting questionnaires to answer to.

### 2.2. Tools

Data collection tools include a parenting questionnaire as well as students' first semester average scores as a measure of educational achievement.

### 3.2. 30-question parenting styles questionnaire (Baum rind)

The initial form of this questionnaire consists of 30 statements which were designed by Diana Baum rind (1973). The questions number 13, 14, 26, and 28 did not load on any factor. Consequently, the mentioned questioned were

deleted. This questionnaire measures the parenting styles with three factors. The statements number 1, 6, 10, 13, 14, 17, 19, 21, 24, and 28 relates to the permissive style, the numbers 1, 2, 3, 7, 9, 12, 16, 25, 26, and 29 to the autocratic style, and the numbers 11, 15, 20, 22, 23, 27, and 30 to the authoritarian (trusty) style. There are 5 columns (totally agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, totally disagree) graded with scores respectively from 0 to 40 in front of each statement. This grade is calculated by adding the scores of respective questions related to each style and dividing them by the number of separate questions.

Reliability and validity of the questionnaire have been confirmed. Boray (1991) used the "Differential" method to check the validity and reliability of this questionnaire and observed that the autocratic style had negative relationships with the permissive one ( $r=0.38$ ) and with the reasonably authoritarian one ( $r=0.48$ ), while the permissive one had no meaningful relationship with reasonably authoritarian one ( $r=0.7$ ).

Boray (1991) used the "Pretest" method to calculate the stability and got the following results: 0.81 for the permissive style, 0.86 for the autocratic style, and 0.78 for the authoritarian style. He also calculated "Internal Consistency" through using "Cronbach coefficient alpha" formula, which resulted in 0.75 for the permissive style, 0.85 for the autocratic style, and 0.82 for the reasonably authoritarian style.

Then, 10 experts in the fields of psychology and psychiatry (2 Ph. D's of psychology, 1 psychiatrist, 2 MA's of psychology, 2 master students of psychology, and 1 bachelor student of psychology) were asked to determine the validity of each statement by putting a check mark and mention their reforming opinion if necessary and add their recommending statement. The results indicated that the questionnaire had a formal validity (credibility).

#### 4.2. Methods of data analysis

Data analysis has been done with the software SPSS in this research. The method of descriptive statistics has been used to describe the data. The multiple-variable regression coefficient, ANOVA test, L.S. Ray Post hoc test have been used to examine hypotheses.

The variables of the research: Parenting style is the independent variable and educational achievement is the dependent variable.

#### 5.2. Describing students' achievement scores (The sample group)

Going on, educational achievement of students has also been studied according to the

gender, and the results have been reflected in table 2. As the table shows, the mean of educational achievement scores by boys is 18.14 and the deviation of this distribution is 1.34. The lowest educational achievement score by boys is obtained 12.36; while the highest score is 19.89 whose variation range is 7.53. Moreover, the mean of educational achievement scores by girls is 18.49 and the standard deviation of this distribution has been obtained 1.51. The variation range of educational achievement scores by girls is 7.03, the lowest score is 12.95, and the highest score is 19.98.

**Table2. Describing students' achievement scores**

Gender	Boy	Girl	Total
Mean	18.14	18.49	18.32
Standard Deviation	1.34	1.51	1.44
Lowest	12.36	12.95	12.36
Highest	19.89	19.98	19.89
Variation Range	7.53	7.03	7.62
Sample Population	131	131	262

#### 5.2. Describing the raw scores of parenting styles of the sample group

To continue, the raw scores obtained for parenting styles have been analyzed. The results of this study have been reported in table 3. The mean, standard deviation, variation range, the lowest score, and the highest score which were observed have been reported in this table.

As it is observed in the table, the mean score of permissive parenting style for the entire sample group is 24.7 and its standard deviation is 4.238. These numbers are different for boys and girls, but they are very close. The variation range of the permissive style's scores is 25, the highest score is 40, and the lowest score is 15. Also, the mean score of autocratic parenting style for the entire sample group is 24.13 and the standard deviation is 4.621. These numbers are different for girls and boys, but they are very close.

The variation range of the autocratic style's scores is 30, the highest score is 40, and the lowest score is 10. And finally, the mean score of authoritarian parenting style for the entire sample group is 42.59 and the standard deviation is 4.289. These numbers are different for girls and boys, but they are very close. The variation range of the authoritarian style's scores is 27, the highest score is 50, and the lowest score is 23. We can take a look at table 4-6 to observe the reported numbers according to the gender

#### 6.2. Describing the raw scores of parenting styles of the sample group

To continue, the raw scores obtained for parenting styles have been analyzed. The results of this study have been reported in table 4. The mean, standard deviation, variation range, the lowest score,

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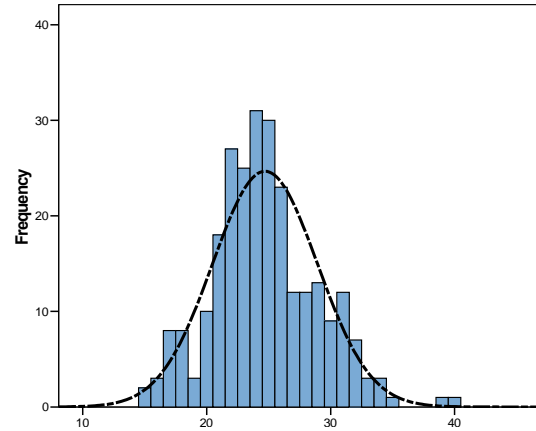
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**Table 3. Describing the raw scores of parenting styles**

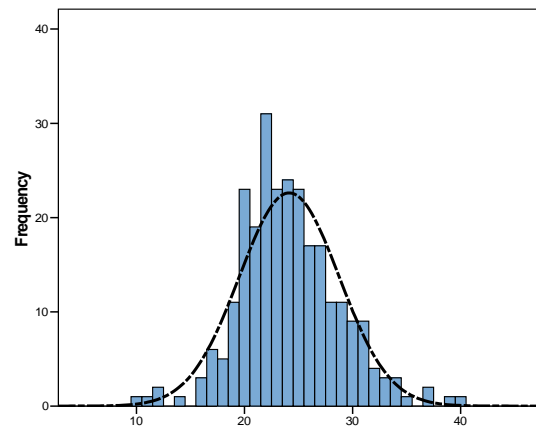
Gender	Indexes	Permissive	Autocratic	Authoritarian
Boy	Mean	24.60	24.56	42.67
	Standard Deviation	4.430	5.037	4.287
	Minimum	15	11	23
	Maximum	40	40	50
	Variation Range	25	29	27
Girl	Mean	24.81	23.71	42.50
	Standard Deviation	4.050	141.4	4.306
	Minimum	15	10	25
	Maximum	39	37	50
	Variation Range	24	27	25
Total	Mean	24.70	24.13	42.59
	Standard Deviation	4.238	4.621	4.289
	Minimum	15	10	23
	Maximum	40	40	50
	Variation Range	25	30	27
	Population	262	262	262

**7.2. Histograms of parenting styles (Permissive – Authoritarian – Autocratic)**

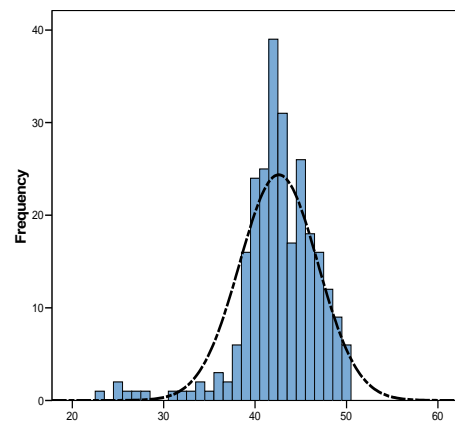
The histograms of each parenting style have been drawn and reported as graphs 1, 2, and 3 to observe the distribution of parenting styles scores better



**Figure1: The histogram of permissive parenting style scores**



**Figure2. The histogram of autocratic parenting style scores**



**Figure3. The histogram of authoritarian parenting style scores**

**3. Results**

Our purpose is to study the relationship between parenting styles and educational achievement in this research.

Statistical analysis of the hypothesis 1 indicates that there is a meaningful relationship between parenting styles and educational achievement of students, which is according to the table 4.

### 1.3. Hypothesis 1: There is a meaningful relationship between parenting styles and educational achievement of students.

The multiple-regression statistical analysis has been used with the simultaneous method, and a summary of findings have been reported in table 4-14. In this table, values of regression coefficient (b), standard beta ( $\beta$ ), values of t and its meaningful levels (Sig), coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ), standardized coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ . adj), value of F and its meaningful level have been reported).

**Table4. The results of regression analysis**

Predictive variable	b	$\beta$	t	Sig	$R^2$	adj. $R^2$	have been reported.
Permissive	-0.011	0.033	0.559	0.576			
Autocratic	-0.067	0.216	3.363	0.001	0.114	0.103	10.94
Authoritarian	0.062	0.185	2.917	0.004			

It is observed in table 4 that of three subtests of parenting styles, two components of autocratic and authoritarian have indicated a meaningful relationship with the educational achievement of students. The relationships are scrutinized in more details in the following.

As it is observed in table 5 the value of regression coefficient for the subtest of autocratic parenting style has been obtained -0.067 and the obtained standard beta of 0.216 is meaningful with  $t=3.363$  at a level of  $p<0.001$ , which means there is an inverse, meaningful relationship between autocratic style subtest and educational achievement of students.

It is also observed in table 4 that the value of regression coefficient for the subtest of authoritarian parenting style has been obtained 0.062 and the obtained standard beta of 0.185 is meaningful with  $t=2.917$  at a level of  $p<0.004$ , which means there is a direct, meaningful relationship between authoritarian style subtest and educational achievement of students.

Also according to table 4, the obtained meaningful level for permissive parenting style subtest is greater than the test error ( $p<0.000$ ), so the relationships of these subtests with educational achievement is meaningless.

The value of determination coefficient has been obtained 0.114 which is a poor value. This means that the predictive variables in this hypothesis, which are the very components of parenting styles, predict 11.4% of the total variation of the educational achievement. The obtained determination coefficient is meaningful with  $f=10.94$  at a level of  $p<0.001$

### 2.3. Hypothesis 2: There is a meaningful difference between the educational achievement of boys and girls.

The method of statistical test for difference of independent means (independent t) has been used to study this hypothesis which says, "There is a meaningful difference between the educational achievement of boys and girls." A summary of findings on these calculations has been reported in table 5. The mean of education achievement scores (M), the standard deviation of educational achievement score (S.D), the value of t, the degree of freedom (DF), and the level of meaningfulness (p)

Gender	N	M	S.D	T	DF	P
The educational achievement of boys	130	18.142	1.343	-1.973	258	0.049
The educational achievement of girls	130	18.491	1.508			

We know that if the value of meaningfulness level which is obtained to compare the two groups is lower than the test error (0.05), meaningfulness will be stabilized at that level. As it is observed in table 4-20, the obtained value of t (-1.973) is meaningful with the degree of freedom 258 at a level of  $p<0.049$ . Consequently, it can be said that there is a meaningful difference between the educational achievements of boys and girls, and this hypothesis is approved of in a way that the educational achievement of girls is meaningfully higher than scores by boys.

## 4. Discussions

The purpose of this research is to study the relationship between parenting styles and the educational achievement of students. The results indicate that there is a meaningful relationship between authoritarian parenting style and educational achievement. Also, the calculations indicate that there is a negative and meaningful relationship between autocratic parenting style and educational achievement. There is no relationship observed between permissive parenting style and educational achievement. They also indicate that there is a meaningful difference between the educational achievements of boys and girls, which means the

educational achievement of girls is higher than that of boys.

As it has been said, there was not a meaningful relationship observed between parenting styles and educational achievement while studying this hypothesis. This finding is consistent with Baumrind's results (1991) which refer to this matter that the children of determined and trusty parents are categorized at a relatively high level both in the cognitive and social skills and are reliable, promising, and socially qualified in adolescences. Also, the results of researches by Querido and Warner, Eyberg (2002), Equilino and Sapel (2001), Galambus *et al.* (2003) had indicated that authoritarian parenting style had consistency and a positive relationship with organization, educational achievement, and intellectual orientation. Also according to the research conducted by Dornbush *et al.* (1987), it was understood that "Hegemonic" and "Liberal" parenting styles had a negative relationship with higher grades, while "Authoritarian" parenting style had a positive relationship with higher grades. The explanation which can be given for this answer is that it has been clarified for some decades that parents' authority was related with a range of cognition and social results of positive emotions, for instance, the authoritarian parenting style has related with "better educational achievement" (Shwartz and Vus, 1996; Winter and Yafi, 2000), "better adaptability" (which means less psychological concern, less behavioral problems, better relationship with peers (Flogeni and Axel, 1993; Silker, 1998) ), higher level of competence, higher self-esteem, higher independence, and higher self-confidence (Baumrind, 1983).

According to the results of this research, teaching parents and making them aware of this realm is essential. Parents must be taught the correct ways of acting toward children. The role of awareness and literacy in nurturing the children must be emphasized. Parents must have reasonable expectations from their children, which causes high self-esteem to create in them.

It is recommended that future researches study the roles of variables in different periods and standard tests be used for educational achievement in order to obtain more precise results. Also, parenting styles in occupational affairs of family problems and mental health which are of important and applicable aspects must be taken into account in future surveys. According to many surveys conducted and the present one, the best method to nurture children is the authoritarian parenting style, so it is recommended that parents choose this positive style to educate their children while having awareness and knowledge of educational issues

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