

Parenting Styles and Children's Academic Performance among Iraqi Families

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ABSTRACT

Background: Parenting styles its approaches of behaviors that are adopted by parents to communicate with their kids. Different styles of parenting can affect the kids' educational accomplishments.

Objectives: To examine the parenting styles' effect on the academic achievement of pupils, and to find out the association between the demographic characteristics of pupils and their parents with their academic achievement.

Methods: A cross-sectional study design was used. The study was performed during the period from December 2022 to January 2023. Convenience sampling of 171 students aged from 9 to 12, as well as their teachers involved in the current study for answering on Arabic academic performance rating scale, the sample was collected from four public schools in Al Hilla city, Babylon province in Iraq. Parenting Styles Questionnaire utilized for identifying a preferred style. Arabic Academic Performance Rating Scale was adopted to evaluate the performance of school-age children.

Results: The findings disclosed that 57% were females, 33.3% were in the fifth grade, and 36.3% were the first child in their families. Some of the parents have diplomas and above as educational attainment (28%). There is a significant statistical relationship between the academic achievement of pupils & their age, sex, order, and number of siblings in the family, grade, and parents' educational attainment at $p\text{-value} < 0.05$. The "Permissive parenting" style is negatively associated with the academic performance of learners. While authoritative, and authoritarian parenting styles positively influence the academic performance of students.

Conclusion: The study concluded that multiple factors influence pupils' academic performance as students' age, sex, child order, number of siblings in the family, school grade, and parents' educational attainment in addition to the great impact of parenting styles. The current study provides an understanding of how various parenting styles may affect students' academic outcomes.

Keywords: Parenting style, authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, academic achievement, children's school achievements.

INTRODUCTION

"Parent's house is the 1st natural institute of physical, spiritual, intellectual and psyche development of children where the parents act as supervisor and guide, whereas the children are subordinators and followers". Children spend abundant time with their parents, which may impact them in a positive or negative way [1].

Several aspects, such as parent personality and psychopathology, parenting philosophies, "parent-child rapport, marital fulfillment, parenting style of partner, work tension, child personality, level of education, and socioeconomic status may affect on way defining the role of parenting styles" [2].

Parenting styles categorized "parents based on two scopes; responsiveness and demandingness, and identified three unlike types of parenting styles: [authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive]" [3]. Darling and Steinberg described "parenting styles as a constellation of attitudes toward the child that are

communicated to the child and that, taken together, create an emotional climate in which the parent's behaviors are expressed" [4].

Commanding or authoritarian style of both parents can understand their offspring' thoughts, this offers guidelines and care of children, whereas lack of persuasion, direct and very responsive features of permissive childrearing. Lastly, "Authoritarian parents are greatly unresponsive, much demanding and assume compliance from their offspring" [5].

Democratic parenting considers (tough & responsive), autocratic (tough nevertheless unresponsive), and permissive (reactive nevertheless not tough). Every parenting style impacts differently on the pupil's educational outcome [6, 7].

The styles that the parents adopt may increase or decrease the educational achievements of students. Pupils who come from homes in which the parenting style is engaging with a child's schooling are expected to achieve higher scores than their classmates [8-10]. Several studies on parenting considered the mother's parenting style or the combined styles of parents associated with several positive outcomes through the satisfaction of psychological needs [11].

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Received: November 27, 2024; Revised: April 03, 2025; Accepted: May 21, 2025

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.37184/lnjpc.2707-3521.7.65>

Parents from different cultures and different socioeconomic backgrounds may offer protection against the persistent impact of burden on students in their environments as learning difficulties by providing life with less pressure results in better outcomes [12].

The atmosphere that is introduced at school cannot perfectly produce professional learning for pupils without parents' assistance [13, 14]. The objectives of the current study are to examine the impact of different parenting styles adopted by parents on the academic achievement of children at school. In addition to finding out the relationship between demographic characteristics of students and their parents with students' academic performance.

METHODS

A cross-sectional study was performed in four randomly selected public schools in Al Hilla city, Babylon province, Iraq during December 2022 to January 2023. The study received approval from nursing faculty/ University of Babylon. Additional approval was also received from the Education Directorate in Babylon province. Consent was sought from specific schools authority and parents. Moreover, assent of children was also taken. Healthy students free of chronic illness, aged 9 to 12 years were included into the study. Sample size calculated by using online calculator OpenEpi by taking 95% confidence interval, 6% margin of error and a population proportion of 20%. The calculated sample size came out to be 171. Non-probability convenience sampling technique was used for enlisting participants.

The tool of the study is utilized after reviewing studies. The instrument encompasses three parts, 52 items, the first part includes demographic information (7 items) regarding the pupils are four items (age, sex, child order, and number of family members). In addition to the characteristics of parents are two items (Parent educational attainment, and work).

The second part involves a Parenting Styles Questionnaire [15], utilized for identifying the preferred style adopted in Babylon province. The scale comprises "30 items: 13 items related to authoritative style, 13 items to authoritarian style, and 4 items to permissive style. Each item is rated on a scale from 1 (never) to 3 (always). All three parenting styles show good internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha value of 0.77 for authoritative, 0.78 for authoritarian, and 0.72 for permissive" [3]. The third part it's an Arabic Academic Performance Rating Scale [16] involves (15 items) scored from 1-5 as poor (0-49%), medium (50-69%), good (70-79%), very good (80-89%), and excellent (90-100%) of last month class tests in the academic year 2022-2023. The Cronbach's Alpha value is 0.90 on the Arabic Academic Performance Rating Scale.

Data was analyzed via utilized of the "Statistical Package for Social Sciences [SPSS] version 26", by use

of descriptive statistical analysis covering frequency, percentage, arithmetic mean, standard deviation, inferential statistics, and multiple regression used to achieve the current objectives at P value ≤ 0.05 .

RESULTS

Table 1 shows that the average age of pupils was 10.7 years, with 57% females. In addition, 33.3% were in the fifth grade, and 36.3% were the first child. High percent for both parents with diplomas and higher educational attainment. 98.6% of fathers are working, whereas 56.9% of mothers working. Fig. (1) displays the distribution of academic achievement of pupils.

Table 2 shows multiple regression of school-age academic performance and their general information.

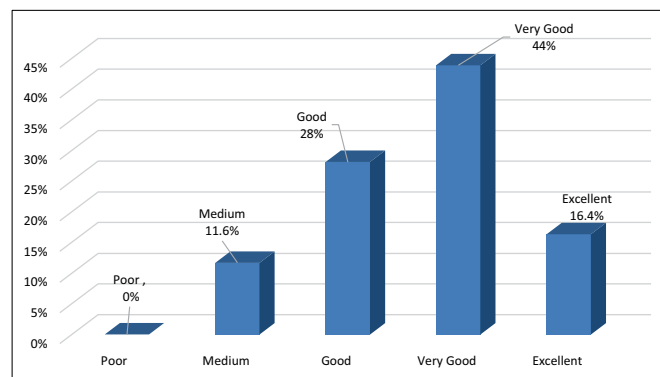


Fig. (1): Pupils' academic achievement.

Table 1: General information of pupils (n=171).

Items			
Variables	Mean (\pm SD)	Minimum	Maximum
Age (in years)	10.7 [\pm 1.1]	9	12
Sex		Frequency	Percentage
	Male	73	43
	Female	98	57
Grade	3 rd	38	22.2
	4 th	34	19.9
	5 th	57	33.3
	6 th	42	24.6
Child Order	First	45	26.3
	Second	43	25.1
	Third	24	14.0
	Forth	28	16.4
	Fifth	17	9.9
	Sixth and above	14	7.1
No. of Sibling	2	2	1.2
	3	14	8.2
	4	16	9.4
	5	44	25.7
	6	49	28.7
	7 and more	46	26.2
Education of Fathers	Illiterate	5	2.9
	Read, write	42	24.6
	Elementary education	30	17.4
	Secondary education	46	27
	Diploma or above	48	28

Items			
Variables	Mean (±SD)	Minimum	Maximum
Education of mothers	Illiterate	2	1.0
	Read, write	44	25.5
	Primary education	34	19.6
	Secondary education	27	15.7
	Diploma or above	65	38.2
Occupation of Fathers	Not working	2	1.4
	Working	169	98.6
Occupation of Mothers	Not working	74	43.1
	Working	97	56.9

SD= Standard Deviation

There is a significant statistical relationship between the academic performance of students with their age, sex, order, number of siblings in the family, grade, and parents' educational attainment at $p\text{-value} \leq 0.05$. There is no significant statistical relationship between school performance and parents' occupation.

Table 3 demonstrates Regression analysis which exposes a weak positive association between authoritative and authoritarian parenting styles and educational performance among school-age children, while permissive parenting style predicted a significant negative association with the educational performance of students.

Table 2: Multiple regression of school-age academic performance and their general information.

Variables	Academic Performance			
	B	Beta	t	p-value
Age	0.137	0.204	2.656	**0.009
Sex	-0.324	-0.218	-2.807	**0.006
Grade	0.191	0.282	3.814	**<0.001
Order in the family	-0.086	-0.212	-2.256	*0.025
Number of siblings	-0.080	0.183	-1.888	*0.041
Parents' education	0.103	0.172	2.183	*0.030
Parents' occupation	0.002	0.001	.014	0.989

*Significant level at $p \leq 0.05$, *Significant level at $p \leq 0.01$, B =unstandardized (Beta=Standardized Coefficients), (t) test the significance of the regression equation

Table 3: Multiple regression academic performance of school-age and parenting style.

Variables	Academic Performance			
	B	Beta	t	p-value
Authoritative style	2.395	0.054	0.690	0.491
Authoritarian style	.371	0.011	0.139	0.889
Permissive style	-4.940	-0.162	-2.082	*0.039

*Significant level at $p \leq 0.05$, B =unstandardized (Beta=Standardized Coefficients), (t) test the significance of the regression equation

DISCUSSION

The academic achievement and performance of pupils are influenced by multiple factors, this study examines these factors, with a particular focus on parenting style.

The present study shows (Table 2, Fig. 1), that school-age children have higher academic performance and get better grades with an increase in their age, and this is

because of the control of consideration and the focus ability that increase with age. This result goes along with the meta-analysis study that conclude; that children showed evidence of using sophisticated attentional control, and this attention is associated with positive academic outcomes [17]. On the contrary, researchers found that children's ages are not significantly impacted on pupils' academic achievement [18, 19]. Furthermore, the study showed that older children have challenges with school achievement [20].

Concerning the child sex, the present study disclosed in (Table 2) that the school performance of boys is better than girls, and this result was opposite to many studies that revealed that females academically perform better than male students [21-24]. While another study found that there were no significant variances between female and male pupils in their academic achievement [19].

Regarding the child order and number of brothers and sisters in the family, the results demonstrate that small family size and low child order predicted positive academic achievements since big families have great responsibilities towards their children, and this may affect the quality of parent-child interaction patterns, and attachment [25-27]. Current findings are compatible with the findings which indicated that parents who have a single child are involved further in their education than parents who have more than one child, and this expect positive academic performance [28]. Whereas, another study exhibited that family size and order of child do not affect pupils' academic success [29]. Also, Korir's study exhibited that the number of brothers and sisters did not affect pupils' academic success [30].

The findings in (Table 1) declare that the majority of fathers are working, while around half of mothers are not working. The study reveals in (Table 2) no significant relationship between parents' jobs and pupils' academic achievement, and the current result is inconsistent with various studies that concluded; a significant association between parents' occupations and pupils' academic accomplishment [13, 19, 22, 31].

In this study, high parents' educational attainment is significantly associated with high academic performance as shown in (Table 2). This result consistent with several studies reveals that pupils with parents who are with high schooling attainment are better than pupils whose parents with low or no schooling attainment [19, 22, 24, 32, 33].

The study result disclosed in (Table 3) presents a weak relationship between authoritarian, and authoritative styles with positive students' educational success. While permissive parenting style was significantly associated with negative pupils' academic achievement. Current results are supported by a study that concluded that; a permissive style harms educational achievement [2]. Other studies, indicated that students perform better when their parents use the authoritative style, which is consistent with the present study findings [1, 21, 34].

However, some researchers revealed an insignificant or weak association between styles of parenting and pupils' academic performance [13, 35]. On the other hand, a number of scholars found that positive parents' involvement and parenting styles have a positive influence on pupils' academic success [1, 2, 14, 36, 37]. All of these studies are in line with the current study results.

LIMITATIONS

It's difficult to establish absolute cause-and-effect relations. Following studies with larger sample sizes may show the influence of cultural as well as socioeconomic aspects on parenting styles.

CONCLUSION

School-age children have higher academic performance and get better grades with an increase in their ages. The school performance of boys is better than girls. Small family size and low child order predicted positive academic achievement. Parents with high educational levels positively affect pupils' achievement at school. Furthermore, democratic and autocratic styles that are adopted by parents result in better educational achievement than permissive style.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Governmental institutions may offer courses for parents to help them become familiar with positive discipline style techniques (parenting style).
- Seminars and workshops may be suggested on parenting styles' alertness in schools.

ETHICS APPROVAL

Official consent was granted from the faculty of nursing / University of Babylon for carrying out the present study. Additional approval was received from the Education Directorate of Babylon (Reference # 125 IN 20-11-2022). All procedures performed in studies involving human participants followed the ethical standards of the institutional and/ or national research committee and the Helsinki Declaration.

CONSENT FOR PUBLICATION

Consent was sought from specific schools authority and parents.

AVAILABILITY OF DATA

All of the collected data are summarized in results of this article. Further data related queries may be directed to the corresponding author.

FUNDING

None.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors are thankful to the schools and participants involved in the current study for their cooperation.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

AF: Study concept, designing, and manuscript drafting. ZA: Study design, critical review, and revision of the initial draft. NM: Study designing, result analysis, interpretation, critical review, and revision of the initial draft. ZA: Critical review and revision of the initial draft. All authors have read and approved the manuscript.

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