

## Original Research Article

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# Preferred parenting style in rural community and its association with socio-demographic variables: a cross sectional study

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** Parenting styles are the methods used by parents when dealing with their children. Some theorists in counseling and psychotherapy have shown the importance of parenting styles in forming children personalities. Baumrind recommended three prototypes of parenting styles: authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive. Parenting styles are associated with different levels of social and cognitive competence in children and adolescents. Hence with this background the following study was undertaken to understand the preferred parenting style practiced in the rural community of southern part of India. The objective of this study is to assess the parenting style practiced in the rural community and to assess the association of socio-demographic variables with the type of parenting styles practiced in rural community.

**Methods:** It is a cross-sectional study, conducted in Basavanapura village of Hunasuru taluk of Mysuru district. 141 parents were selected by simple random sampling. Data was collected using parenting style questionnaire (PSQ). The questionnaire also included information on socio demographic variables. Data was analyzed using SPSS V.24. Analysis is done using descriptive statistics like percentage and inferential statistics like chi square analysis to find the association between socio demographic variables and preferred parenting styles.

**Results:** The most preferred parenting style reported was authoritative (63.2%) followed by authoritarian (26.2%) and permissive (10.6%) types. Years of marriage was found to be significantly associated with preferred parenting styles.

**Conclusions:** Nearly three fourth of the parents practiced authoritative parenting style with this type of parenting style adopted by parents having children less than twenty years.

**Keywords:** Parenting style, Rural community, Children

## INTRODUCTION

Parenting styles are the methods used by parents when dealing with their children.<sup>1</sup> Some theorists in counselling and psychotherapy have shown the importance of parenting styles in forming children's personalities.<sup>2</sup> Baumrind proposed the three prototypes of parenting styles: authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive.<sup>3</sup>

Authoritative parents attempt to direct their children's activities and tend to exercise their authority in a rational, flexible manner. They recognize their children's individual needs and assert the children's positive qualities and they don't use punitive methods.<sup>4</sup> Authoritarian parents are highly directive with their children and value unquestioned obedience and they use punitive methods to control their children's behavior.<sup>5</sup>

Permissive parents tend to make few demands on their children, allowing the children to regulate their own behaviour as much as possible.<sup>6,7</sup> The development of parent's philosophy about parenting is based on individual and family experiences, personality style, their own child's characteristics, social context and their cultural background.<sup>8</sup> These different parenting styles were found to be associated with different levels of social and cognitive competence in children and adolescents; self-esteem, depression; decision making. The result of these studies showed that the children of authoritative parents have better psycho-social skills than the children of authoritarian and permissive parents.<sup>9</sup> Hence realizing the impact of parenting style on the personality of the children the following study was undertaken.

### Objectives

The objective of this study is to assess the parenting style practiced in the rural community and to assess the association of socio-demographic variables with the type of parenting style practiced in rural community.

### METHODS

It is a cross-sectional study, conducted in rural community of Mysuru, in the village of Basavapura, Hunsuru Taluk, Mysuru District from 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 to 7<sup>th</sup> April 2017. The households in the village were numbered, Out of the 1243 houses in the village line listed, 150 households were included in the study by simple random sampling (lottery method). Data was collected using self-administered questionnaire. Parenting style practiced was assessed by Parenting Style Questionnaire (PSQ). It had three sections namely, authoritative, authoritarian and permissive parenting style. Scores ranged from "Never" to "Always" on a 5-point Likert scale. The total score possible for authoritative, authoritarian and permissive parenting style were 6. The highest score in a section indicated preferred parenting style. Data was entered in Microsoft Excel and was analyzed using SPSS V.24. Analysis was done using descriptive statistics like percentage and inferential statistics like chi square analysis to find the association

between socio demographic variables and preferred parenting style. Informed consent was obtained by the study participants and Institutional Ethical committee clearance was obtained.

### RESULTS

Out of 150 questionnaires, 09 were incomplete. Hence 141 households were included for analysis. Average age of the parents participated in the study was  $42.7 \pm 10$  years. The predominant type of family noticed in the study population was nuclear family (84.4%), followed by joint family (14.9%) and three generation family (0.7%). Among the study participants, 21.3% were illiterates, 31.2% completed 10th standard, 31.2% completed pre-university, around 9.9% participants were graduates and 6.4% had completed post-graduation. Primary source of income was manual labor which came up to (58.2%), followed by agriculture (41.1%) and rest contributed up to 0.7%. 46.1% of the study participants belonged to lower middle class. 51.1% of the participants had both male and female children, 31.2% had girl child and 17.7% had male child. 24.8% were illiterates, 34% of the mothers had studied up to primary and high schooling, 6.4% finished their graduation and 2.1% completed post-graduation. Average age of the children was  $13.1 \pm 7.1$  years. Average years of marriage completed by parents were  $17.7 \pm 9.5$  years. The most preferred parenting style noted was authoritative (63.1%) followed by authoritarian (26.2%) and permissive (10.6%) types (Figure 1).

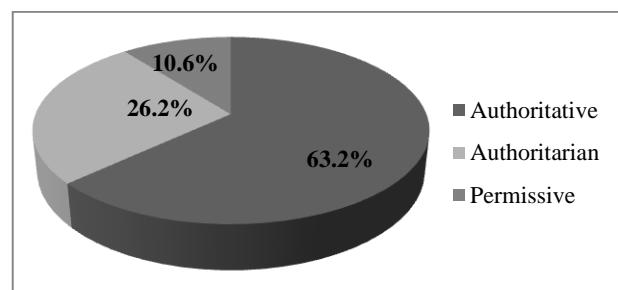


Figure 1: Type of parenting style.

Table 1: Association of socio-demographic variables to parenting styles.

Categories	Parenting style			Total (%)	P value
	Authoritative	Authoritarian	Permissive		
<b>Type of family</b>					
Nuclear family	78	30	11	84.4	
Joint family	11	06	04	14.9	0.228*
Three generation family	00	01	00	0.7	
Total (%)	63.2	26.2	10.6	100	
<b>Education of father</b>					
Illiterate	20	04	06	21.3	
Primary and high schooling	24	16	04	31.2	0.398*
Pre-university	30	11	03	31.2	
Graduation	10	03	01	9.9	
Post-graduation	05	03	01	6.4	
Total (%)	63.2	26.2	10.6	100	

Continued.

Categories	Parenting style			Total (%)	P value
	Authoritative	Authoritarian	Permissive		
<b>Primary source of income</b>					
Agriculture	35	18	05	41.1	
Manual labour	54	18	10	58.2	0.327*
Others	00	01	00	0.7	
Total (%)	63.2	26.2	10.6	100	
<b>Socio-economic status</b>					
Lower class	41	19	05	46.1	
Middle class	33	12	07	36.9	0.838
Upper class	15	06	03	17.0	
Total (%)	63.2	26.2	10.6	100	
<b>Years of marriage</b>					
0-10	26	13	02	29.1	
11-20	41	13	04	41.1	0.014* <sup>#</sup>
21-30	17	05	08	21.3	
31-40	05	04	00	6.4	
41-50	00	02	01	2.1	
Total (%)	63.2	26.2	10.6	100	
<b>Average age of children (years)</b>					
0-10	35	18	05	41.1	
11-20	44	15	05	45.5	0.126*
21-30	08	02	05	10.6	
31-40	02	02	00	02.8	
Total (%)	63.2	26.2	10.6	100	
<b>Education of mother</b>					
Illiterate	25	04	06	24.8	
Primary and high schooling	28	14	06	34.1	0.119*
Pre-university	31	13	02	32.6	
Graduation	04	04	01	6.4	
Post-graduation	01	02	00	2.1	
Total (%)	63.2	26.2	10.6	100	
<b>Birth spacing (years)</b>					
<5	87	37	15	98.6	
5-10	02	00	00	1.4	1.000*
Total (%)	63.2	26.2	10.6	100	

\*Fischer exact value; <sup>#</sup>p-value was found to be significant.

Analysis showed statistical significance with years of marriage category to parenting style ( $p=0.014$ ). Statistical significance was not seen between type of family ( $p=0.228$ ), education of father ( $p=0.398$ ), primary source of income ( $p=0.327$ ), socio-economic status ( $p=0.838$ ), average age of children ( $p=0.126$ ), education of mother ( $p=0.119$ ) and birth spacing category ( $p=1.000$ ) with parenting styles (Table 1).

## DISCUSSION

Our study showed the most practiced parenting style as authoritative. A study done by Ishak et al, shows that both authoritative and authoritarian parenting styles are the most common practices followed by the parents.<sup>10</sup> Another study done in San Francisco, by Smetana et al, showed that parents viewed themselves as more authoritative than any other parenting style.<sup>11</sup> In our study the findings showed that authoritative parenting style was practiced by most of the parents. This could be due to the reason that the study was done in the rural community,

majority had children aged less than 20 years and unlike in western countries. In Indian scenario, children are dependent on the parents for their livelihood till later years of age. There are many other studies showing that permissive or authoritarian type of parenting style have a negative effect on children's grades, high internet usage among children, negative outcomes as anxiety, depression, substance misuse and behavioral problems in school.<sup>12-14</sup> Saunders et al study has shown that authoritative parenting style has inverse relation with physical activity. In the study it reflected authoritative parents provided high support to their children, making them non-active in terms of physical activity.<sup>15</sup>

With reference to the association of socio-demographic variables with the parenting style practiced, we found statistical significance between years of marriage and parenting styles. A study done by Jaradat et al, showed that the father whose family income was high was more authoritative. Those who had not finished graduation, whose wife is working, who's family size was small is

more permissive; father whose family income is low is more authoritarian.<sup>16</sup> Another study done by Kashahu et al, showed that authoritarian parenting style was associated with family's low social status and economic level, whereas authoritative style was associated with high academic achievement.<sup>17</sup>

## CONCLUSION

From the above discussion we came to conclusion that Authoritative parenting style is predominantly practiced in the rural communities. Most of the studies clearly show that authoritative parenting is followed by most of the people than authoritarian and permissive parenting styles. Our study provides insight of parenting style practiced among rural communities. Permissive and authoritarian parenting styles have negative impact that leads to the deviant behavioral problems of the children. 75% of our parents in our study are practicing authoritative parenting style.

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