Original Research Article

Parenting Styles of Adolescents' Parents in Kandy District, Sri Lanka: An Exploratory Analysis

This research adopts a qualitative research methodology to examine parenting styles of adolescents' parents in Kandy District, Sri Lanka. The study highlight four main themes and subthemes that reveal how parents' childhood experiences, cultural preferences, and role models shape their parenting practices. The results indicate that authoritative and permissive parents tend to have positive childhood experiences, positive relationships with their own parents in their childhood, and their own parenting practices are influenced by role models in their childhood. Authoritarian and uninvolved parents, on the other hand, report mostly negative childhood experiences with their own parents and fewer positive role models. Cultural preferences also vary within the four main parenting styles. For example, authoritative parents report more preference to apply what they perceived as both Eastern and Western cultural elements regarding parenting compared with other parenting styles. Authoritarian parents report using corporal punishment more than other study participants who represent the other parenting styles. The study concludes that more parenting styles- focused research regarding these factors is needed globally and in the Sri Lankan context.

(research design in abstract does not reflect mixed method design as stated in the methodology, abstract not well explained on the study research design)

Keywords: parenting styles, adolescence, role model, childhood experiences

1. INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

WHAT IS THE CURRENT PREVALENCE AND REPORT FROM RECENT STUDIES?

WHAT IS THE ISSUE THAT RELATES WITH YOUR RESEARCH PROJECT?

NOT ONLY DEFINE

While children depend on parents and learn from them, parents seek to promote children's physical, psychological and social well-being. *Parenting practices* can be defined as directly observable specific behaviors that parents use to socialize their children (Darling and Steinberg 1993). Accordingly, a *parenting style* is 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" (Darling and Steinberg 1993, p. 488).

Baumrind (1971) identified three parenting styles to describe how normal parenting behaviors differ from one another: the permissive, the authoritarian, and the authoritative. Later on in the 1980s, Maccoby and Martin (1983) attempted to bridge Baumrind's typology and the conceptual framework of parenting dimensions. Based on the combination of two dimensions, demandingness and responsiveness, they defined four parenting styles: authoritative (i.e., high demandingness and high responsiveness); authoritarian (i.e., high demandingness and low responsiveness); permissive (i.e., low demandingness and high responsiveness); and neglectful (i.e., low demandingness and low responsiveness). These two parenting dimensions are similar, yet not identical to the dimensions of 'parental support' and 'parental behavioral control.' Based on Maccoby and Martin's work, Baumrind (1989,1991) expanded her typology with a fourth parenting style, namely the 'neglectful' parenting style.

1.1 The Impact of Parenting Style on Adolescent Children

1.1.2 Authoritative Parenting Style

According to Baumrind (1966), authoritative parents provide proper guidance to their children in a problem-oriented and logical way. While this parenting style has a higher level of demandingness, authoritative parents generally welcome effective communication between themselves and their child (Piko & Balazs, 2012). Hoskins (2014) points out that by increasing support for positive behaviors, authoritative parents show more responsiveness to the child's strengths and goals. Moreover, these parents encourage their children verbally, set rules and explain the reason behind for these rules in order to shape children's behavior. Previous researches found that the authoritative parenting style was correlated with higher subjective well-being, self-esteem, life satisfaction, academic achievement, and most optimal long term development of children (Calafat et al., 2014; Chan & Koo, 2010; Chang, 2007; Hoeve et al., 2011; Williams et al., 2009;). (ALL REFERENCES ARE TOO OUTDATED)

1.1.2 Authoritarian Parenting Style

Contrasting with the autonomy and respect at the heart of the authoritative parenting style, the core values of the authoritarian parenting style include obedience and restricted autonomy (Baumrind, 1966, p. 890). Authoritarian parents seek to shape, evaluate, and control their children's attitudes and expect them to adhere to strict rules of conduct. These rules are known as absolute standards, and children will be penalized if they fail to comply with them. Cherry (2015) showed that authoritarian parents generally fail to present reasons behind such rules. According to Hoskins (2014), authoritarian parents exhibit high demandingness and lower responsiveness, expecting their child's obedience without explanations. Compared to the authoritative parenting style, authoritarian parenting is related to negative outcomes such as negative mood, poorer social skills, feelings of insecurity and hostility, and even higher levels of aggression (Barber et al., 2005; Casas et al., 2006).

1.1.3 Permissive Parenting Style

Psychological autonomy, lax behavioral control, and acceptance are promoted by permissive parents (Baumrind et al., 2010). The permissive parenting style is characterized by unpredictability, lack of discipline, and lack of boundaries. Children of permissive parents are more likely to grow up in uninvolved homes than children who grow up with authoritative parents (Barber, 1996). Such a lack of guidance and involvement from parents in shaping their children's cognitive, social and emotional abilities affects adolescents' cognitive and behavioral development (Lambom et al., 1991). Adolescents of permissive parents have less self-control, less self-confidence, and less curiosity than children of authoritarian or authoritative parents (Baumrind, 1971). They may also develop maladaptive high confidence about their social abilities, which may be related to their social interactions (Lambom et al., 1991). Permissive parents tend to have lower expectations of their child, which may encourage the child to have lower expectations of him or herself (Baumrind, 1971).

1.1.4 Uninvolved Parenting Style

As opposed to other parenting practices, uninvolved parents exhibit careless conduct control and even rejection towards their children (Baumrind, 2013). This sort of parent acts to limit parental involvement and often fails to respond to the child's needs. Having uninvolved parents is associated with a number of negative outcomes, including adolescent children's somatic complaints, low grades, and delinquency (Lambom et al., 1991) and low scores on self-esteem and social competence measures (Beams & Farrell, 1992). Girls who grow up under uninvolved fathers were shown to be more aggressive towards their classmates than girls who grow up under authoritative parents (Hart et al., 1998).

1.2 The Impact of Parents' Childhood Experiences on Parenting Styles

Many pieces of literature have examined the transmission of parenting, which means how childhood experiences impact later parenting practices (Putallaz et al., 1998). A previous study on how parental styles linked across generations has shown that parental practices characteristic of an authoritarian parenting style such as physical discipline, harsh criticism and negative interactions increased the likelihood that the child would later similarly apply an authoritarian parenting style (Bower-Russa, 2005). Many previous studies have focused on the transmission of harsh, authoritarian parenting practices over several generations, showing that that adolescents who experienced authoritarian parenting with harsh discipline were more likely in adulthood to behave aggressively toward their own children (Hops et al., 2003; Simons et al., 1992). Furthermore, parenting styles can be predicted by

parental characteristics in the past, including stress and family supportive relationships (Cowan et al., 1996). Previous studies have shown the link between parents' insecure childhood experiences and less love and commitment for their own children (Cowan et al., 1996). These problems can have long-term consequences for parents and children in terms of mental health and quality of interpersonal relationships. More specifically, parents' history of physical, emotional, or sexual abuse during childhood is considered as a risk factor for the enactment of negative parenting styles in adulthood (Hughes & Cossar 2016). Living with an abusive or uninvolved parent during one's childhood can lead to emotional problems such as experiences of mistrust, uncertainty, and the avoidance of close relationships (Banyard et al., 2003).

1.3 Disciplinary Strategies and Parenting styles

Many studies have shown that parenting values and beliefs influence parents' disciplinary responses toward their adolescent children (Pinderhugz et al., 2000). Parents who believe that parenting practices positively affect their children's outcomes are less likely to adopt coercive strategies as a disciplinary response. Moreover, studies carried out in North America and Europe have suggested that at least in those contexts physical punishment is more commonly used by parents who have lower levels of formal education and fewer economic resources (Dietz, 2000; Durrant et al., 1999), including those living below the poverty line or facing unemployment (Wolfner & Gelles, 1993).
Parental attitudes transmitted from generation to generation can be a significant factor influencing parents' disciplinary practice towards their children. The findings are consistent with the fact that parents who were physically abused during childhood are more likely to physically punish their children (Ghate et al., 2003). A long-term study of the development of attitudes toward corporal punishment, has suggested a link between the childhood experience of physical punishment and subsequent approval of a slap in the face as a disciplinary strategy (Deater-Deckard et al, 2003).

A study of factors which predict mothers' use of corporal punishment for their children focused on mothers' knowledge of child development and alternative responses to family conflict (child-parent), disciplinary goals, childhood experience of corporal punishment, and approval of physical punishment. Results suggest that approval of physical punishment was the strongest predictor of whether a mother would use it or not (Durant, 2005). A study carried out in the United Kingdom by Ghate et al (2003), similarly found that parents who accept corporal punishment were five times more likely to use it than parents who did not accept the practice. The frequency of harsh disciplinary practices over time has been found to be associated directly with an authoritarian parenting style (Robinson et al., 1995).

1.4 Role Models, Cultural Norms, and Values Related to Parenting

Along with childhood experiences and attitudes towards particular disciplinary practices, parental role models as well as cultural norms and values are also key in shaping parents' behavior. Many researchers have found a significant relationship between positive role models and positive outcomes among adolescents. Werner (1995) identified positive role models, including family members, peers, and school teachers, as a contributing factor to resilience in high-risk behaviors of adolescents. A previous study has shown that having a positive family role model can protect adolescents from negative psychosocial risks (Bryant and Zimmerman, 2003). Similarly, parental role models influence adolescents' later parenting behaviors. Henry et al. (1992) suggest that it is important for adolescents to have same-sex parenting role models as they try to shape their own identities and prepare for the future role of a parent, and indeed, Galbo (1983) found that women list their mothers and men their fathers as the most important role models in their lives. As the following analysis will reveal, among Sri Lankan parents, their own mothers and fathers emerge is significant figures who shaped their approach to parenting.

Crucially, parenting practices vary across different cultures and societies (Sanders, 2005). Russell et al. (2010) offer a summary of literature focused on parenting in Asian-American families and White American families to highlight the key differences between these broad cultural groups. The studies reviewed suggest that what is accepted by White Americans as good parenting generally falls under the category of authoritative parenting. In mainstream White American culture, authoritarian parenting is identified as a negative parenting type, which affects adolescents' wellbeing negatively and which is not as effective as authoritative parenting. However, against the core values of authoritative parenting which emphasizes open communication, Chinese adolescents reported that their parents show their

love by instrumental support with basic needs and sacrifice rather than by verbal support. According to these adolescents, parental sacrifice is central for their support (Russell et al., 2010). This, too, differs from the emphasis on children's autonomy and independence, which is embedded in the authoritative parenting style. Indeed, in many Western cultures, children are encouraged to develop autonomy and self-expression. Social initiative is highly valued because of socialization and dominant cultural values. In many Asian societies, on the other hand, social initiative is not as highly appreciated because social initiative can interfere with interpersonal relationships, and these values affect parental attitudes (Chen and French, 2008).

While the literature has focused on general parenting behaviors, there are few researches on how factors such as childhood experiences, role models, and cultural preferences affect each parenting style differently. (SUCH AS? PLEASE CITE SPECIFIC REFERENCES TO JUSTIFY YOUR STATEMENT) Moreover, in the Sri Lankan context, research on parenting styles and affecting factors has been very limited despite the fact that there is widespread concern among parents and educators to foster positive family relationships and effective parenting practices. Therefore this research aims to explore the parenting styles of parents of adolescents in Kandy District, Sri Lanka, and the key factors affecting the main four parenting styles. Study findings will help educators and counseling professionals understand parenting styles in the Sri Lankan cultural context, which in turn may inform the development of more appropriate training and counseling strategies to improve parenting skills.

The main research objectives are a) to explore the prevailing parenting styles of parents of adolescents in Kandy District, Sri Lanka; b) to identify potential unique parenting styles and practices and parents' justification for their parenting behaviors; c) to discover how childhood experiences, values, role models, and cultural preferences influence parents' parenting styles; and d) to identify the criteria that the parents use to discipline their children.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research design

This research is based on a mixed methods research design, which includes both quantitative and qualitative research methods.

2.2 Participants

A purposive sample of 120 parents of adolescents (n=120) participated in the research study. The sample includes an even split between parents of adolescent boys and girls (Boy's mother = 30; Boy's father = 30) and (Girl's mother = 30; Girl's father = 30) and an even split between mothers (60) and fathers (60). For the qualitative phase, 16 parents who participated in the quantitative portion of the study were selected for in-depth interviews. Study participants were selected based on their children's age and education level. The parents had to have an only child between the ages of 10 and 18 and a minimum educational qualification of GCE A / L or beyond. Parents were selected, both working and non-employed, to represent the government sector and private sector. They were purposively selected through various schools, government- and non-government organizations in Kandy District. Although attempts were made to select a sample representative of Sri Lanka's four major religious communities, the sample includes only parents belonging to Buddhist, Christian, and Muslim religions. A Hindu parent who fit the selection criteria could not be found. Some parents participating in the study were single parents.

2.3 Instruments and Procedure

During the quantitative phase of the study, the Parenting Styles and Dimensions Questionnaire (Kimble 2014) was administered to 120 participating parents to assess their parenting style. (WHERE IS THE RESULTS FOR THIS PHASE?) As a rehearsal for the major study, a pilot study was conducted to evaluate the feasibility of the proposed major study. The second, qualitative phase of the study involved in-depth, semi-structured interviews with 16 participants selected from among the initial 120 respondents. The 16 respondents represent the four parenting styles (4 for each of the four styles). The interview questions were developed along two main dimensions: the childhood background of the parent and parents' cultural and moral values regarding childcare. In the childhood

background part, questions focus on personal information about childhood (village, family members, schooling, etc.) as well as the respondents' relationship with his or her own parents. The questions also cover the relationship between the respondent and his or her spouse and their feelings about the spouse's parenting style as well as the respondent's role models as a child regarding parenthood and their impact on present parenting attitudes. The second section of the semi-structured interview focuses on the parents' cultural values related to parenting, attitudes about stereotypical parenting styles that make children better, and experiences of positive or negative outcomes of those stereotypical parenting styles based on cultural values and morals. To protect participants' confidentiality, privacy, and anonymity the researcher used codes on data documents that were recorded and transcribed without using participants' names or other identifying details. SPSS was used to analyze quantitative data from the first phase and thematic analysis was used for the second phase of the research.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

DESCRIPTIVE RESULTS OF THE STUDY?

The data collected in the qualitative phase of the study highlights four key themes and related sub-themes. The themes include 1) parental influence; 2) the parent-child relationship; 3) role models; and 4) cultural values.

3.1 Parental Influence

Parental influence here refers to participants' childhood experiences regarding parental involvement, which means participants' relationship experiences with their own parents. The relationship with one's parents as well as wider family dynamics shape many aspects of a person's development into adulthood. The interviews sought to explore the various dimensions of this influence as it pertains to participants' approach to their own parenting practice with their children.

3.2 Family Issues

Parents who practice authoritative and permissive parenting styles reported not having serious family issues in their childhood and being satisfied with their childhood family lives. There are no gender differences regarding this matter, which means both mothers and fathers with authoritative and permissive parenting styles tend to have positive childhood experiences with their families. As the representative responses below indicate, they also have positive feelings about their parents:

> "Mother helped us a lot with our education. Father was like that too. Both are very good. We were treated well. We did everything well. So we have a positive feeling …" (Permissive_Mother_Girl)

> "Father always told us to learn. He did all things for us, especially our education. According to their knowledge, we were always asked to study from childhood. Education is not just a lesson." (Authoritative_Father_Girl)

Moreover, the participants mentioned above who practice authoritative and permissive parenting styles reported that there was a good relationship between their own parents. That is, within their families, the mother and father had a good relationship. They always worked in the home together and motivated the child (participant) to work hard.

As opposed to the above mentioned data, most of the parents who are practicing authoritarian and uninvolved parenting styles reported some family issues compared with the other parenting styles. They faced family conflicts between the mother and father and these conflict situations pushed them to a depressed mood as children. Some participants reported domestic violence situations, which they connected with poverty and alcoholism. Asked whether his father was addicted to alcohol, one study participant answered:

> "Yes, was. He used to get alcohol every day. Therefore fights each and every day. We feel sad about mom. We were sad when tears fall from our mother's eyes." (Authoritative_Father_Girl)

The association between negative childhood experiences and less responsive and emotionally involved parenting in adulthood has been reported in the literature. Zalewski et al. (2013), found that mothers who self-reported childhood emotional abuse were rated by their children as being significantly lower in acceptance and higher in psychological control, which means more likely to enact an authoritarian parenting style. Pereira et al. (2012) similarly report a significant relationship between the maternal experience of childhood emotional neglect and family dysfunctions, increased ratings of parental distress, and dysfunctional interaction with the child.

3.3 Parent-Child Bond

Authoritative and Permissive participants reported that they have had a good relationship with their parents. They spent most of their childhood with their parents and maintained a healthy relationship throughout the life course. Some participants reported their fathers worked far away from home. The father would come home once or twice a week. Although they were busy, they always tried to be with their children.

> "Father worked at the CTB. My mother was at home. She did not work. When we got up, father had gone to work. Father was no longer at home, so we stayed with Mom. There was a strong connection. So, we are not like these days. At that time the relationship was more than ever. We work together." (Permissive_Father_Girl)

Compared with the other two parenting styles (authoritative and permissive), participants who practice authoritarian and uninvolved parenting styles report having a poor relationship with their own parents. Due to alcoholism and family conflicts, they tried to avoid their parents. With this kind of conflicted background, they hadn't received well motivated advice from their parents. Therefore they always tried to develop their targets themselves.

> "Father had harsh behaviors. Those behaviors had not decreased... And it has not decreased now also. Continuously he has it. Mother was tormented with father's behavior. There were tears and sadness. After mom got sick, father's behavior changed a bit. The relationship turned a little better." (Athoritarian_Father_Girl)

This pattern is consistent with previous research which suggests that individuals with a history of abuse and family dysfunction are at an increased risk for uninvolved or authoritarian parenting characteristics towards their own children (Dixon et al., 2005; Markowitz, 2001; Pears & Capaldi, 2001).

3.4 Parent-Child Relationship

All sixteen participants, across the four main parenting styles, believe that they have a healthy and good relationship with their children. All participants also reported spending much time with their children and scheduling their days in such a way that they can allocate more time for them. Interestingly, this stands in tension with the uninvolved parenting style, which is characterized by a relatively low level of connection, involvement and strictness for one's children (Kremers et al., 2003). Yet even those parents claimed to make time for their children.

> "We have to live in such a way that there is no blemish on us, that we don't have to hear a word from anyone. We both advise and admonish. We set aside our time for him and do those things." (Uninvolved_Father_Girl)

One of the main reasons for this contradictory finding may be the impact of social desirability bias, which is the tendency to present oneself to be socially acceptable even when this representation is not wholly reflective of one's reality (Grimm, 2010). At the same time, however, this contradiction suggests that being an attentive and involved parent is socially valued in this context, and even those parents who are not able to live up to this expectation recognize it.

In addition to allocating more time, participants emphasized creating a good educational environment for their children. This involves encouraging their children to excel, providing available resources for children to complete their educational goals, and as much as they can, teaching valuable subject matter and offering academic advice. One father reflected on the importance of education as follows:

> "All facilities have been provided. So, learn and be a good person ... I said, study well and come to a good place in society. We gave him everything for that." (Authoritative_Father_Boy)

3.5 Role Models

Participants who practice authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive parenting styles all reported that they had a role model in their childhood regarding parenting. But parents who practice the uninvolved parenting style reported they did not have any such role model in their childhood. As one mother reported:

> "There is no such person. Everyone is the same. There is no one special. There are no such people in life I imitate. Not really. Anyone like that. From the youngest age, my child has been under my care. I raised my child in my own way." (Uninvolved_Mother_Girl)

With the exception of uninvolved parents, parents practicing the other parenting styles expressed a desire to emulate other parents' attributes which they value, including those of their own parents but also people outside of the family such as former school teachers. Participants reported that personality characteristics such as kindness, hard work, working according to the social norms, sensitivity and leadership skills where the main reasons for valuing a particular role model in their childhood. In the below examples, one parent reflects on her own mother's influence while the other remembers a particularly influential teacher:

> "I really got protection from my mother. She is everything. My child also grew up near the mother. My mother protected us from a lot of things. Security... love... giving advice when doing something wrong ... gave us only what was essential…didn't give unnecessary things." (Authoritative_Mother_Boy)

> "There was a sir who did geography… We liked him. At school... We ask and solve our personal problems as well with him. If really there was a problem, he felt free to help. Sir still gives advice… to finish your education... to go to campus and make relationships... then it is okay to do that... that is how advice was given." (Permissive_Father_Boy)

3.6 Cultural Preferences

Under the cultural preferences theme, the analysis examines the subjective cultural preferences and norms that affect the parents' parenting practices. Three main themes emerge from this data: 1) Eastern vs. Western influences; 2) parenting criteria; and 3) punishments.

3.7 Eastern vs. Western Values

The majority of participants who practice uninvolved, authoritarian, and permissive parenting styles like to follow and apply what they perceive to be "Eastern" cultural elements, which are understood to reflect traditional cultural values in Sri Lanka. Some participants directly reject what they see as "Western" cultural elements regarding parenting:

> "I think our system is good with this and our culture. Abroad, there is no such respect. A culture looks like nothing. I think the way we go with our culture is good." (Authoritarian_Father_Boy)

These parents tend to justify their preferences based on a generalized, popular view of the distinction between "Eastern" and "Western" societies and their presumed individualistic or socio-centric orientations, with Sri Lanka being seen as a representative "Eastern" culture. Thus, the parents who rejected Western cultural elements felt that the child-parent bond in Western societies is not as strong when compared with Sri Lankan society. They cited cultural practices common in North America and Western Europe such as the tendency to give adolescents more autonomy and privacy, encouraging them to live independently, and allowing them to work a part-time job while continuing their education.

Respondents also noted that parents in the West emphasize personal freedom and place fewer restrictions on their children in matters of marriage, clothing, and relationships. Study participants who rejected such practices suggested that as a result, children in Western contexts are likely to have less respect for their parents as compared with Sri Lankan social norms and that families will be less cohesive and supportive.

> "Our way is good. I think the way we are is good. Respect parents. Asking what is being said. It is not like that abroad. People who are in western culture do not behave well. We were all together in our childhood. Everyone was well taken care of. But abroad it is not like that. It is as if children are being separated from their parents at an early age. Our way is good." (Authoritarian_Father_Boy)

On the other hand, participants reported the most influential and important cultural elements of parenting in the Sri Lankan or "Eastern" context. They mentioned that in Eastern societies parenting reflects the value of putting family first and that family members are emotionally connected and supported. In Eastern cultures, parents' expectations of their children can lead to stricter routines and discipline, and children usually continue to live with their parents until they get married. As one mother explained:

> "Asians have family unity. According to culture everything... from birth to these days everything is done according to culture. They like it... that is, they like to associate grandparents with adults. Going to the temple for a birthday like that ... but now with the society, a girl over the age of 18 should be kept with family at least until she gets married." (Authoritarian_Mother_Girl)

In contrast, participants who practice the authoritative parenting style mentioned that they prefer to incorporate both Western and Eastern cultural elements regarding parenting. While they appreciate Eastern cultural elements such as family closeness and respect, they do not reject those they perceive as positive Western ones.

> "Our system is good. I think we can live anywhere in the world if we adapt to our system. There are many things to get from the West. I mean the Sri Lankan system is better than the Western one. But its not a problem to take good things from the West. Our family unit is valuable. Our way is valuable. It is also valuable to get the good things from both cultures." (Authoritative_Father_Girl)

The results coincide with the existing research, which suggests that the authoritative parenting style is more liberal. Authoritative parents usually welcome effective communication and feel free to apply different types of practices used in different cultures for the betterment of the child (Piko & Balazs, 2012). However, it has to be noted that there is very little previous literature on how various parenting styles impact on parents' willingness to engage with diverse cultural elements for their parenting practices.

3.8 Disciplinary Strategies

All participants who practice the authoritarian parenting style use some type of punishment as a means of disciplining the child. The most common disciplinary practices include shouting and removing some positive reinforcement. Three participants who practice the authoritarian parenting style reported hitting as a punishment method as well. For example:

> "So I'm not going to give advice all the time. It is a bother to him. Then he will not listen. If I get angry, I scold… if I feel like hitting, I take a stick and hit about two times. Then you get scared of it. Then he doesn't do that again... If you give too much leeway it will be difficult to fix." (Authoritarian_Father_Girl)

Other participants who represent permissive and uninvolved parenting styles, such as the mother quoted below, reported mostly shouting as a method for disciplining their child:

> "We are like friends. When he asks what he doesn't know, I teach him. But he is scared. (Laughter) I don't scold either. But if you needed, I will scold. It's frightening these days. Now, even if he tries to do something unwanted, he just says that his mother will scold him." (Uninvolved_Mother_Boy)

In contrast to these parents, participants who practice authoritative parenting reported mostly using the removal of some positive reinforcement as a method of punishment. Only one participant reported that he rarely shouts at his child. None of the authoritative parents reported hitting their children as punishment.

> "Yes. I don't make big rules, but he's a little tougher than me. But I did not even raise my hand. I don't hit. The wife did not even hit. He is not allowed to watch TV when he does something wrong. Or to get his phone. But afterward I feel sad." (Authoritative_Father_Boy)

The findings are consistent with studies, which suggests that authoritarian parents use punishment as a primary strategy for disciplining their children. Authoritative parents, on the other hand, reported *not* using negative punishments. This is consistent with the ways that current literature tends to represent the authoritative parenting style as avoiding punishment. However, it should be mentioned that Baumrind's original model does not suggest authoritative parents avoid punishing their children and Baumrind's later writings distinguish between confrontive and coercive strategies to differentiate between authoritative and authoritarian approaches to punishment (Gunnoe 2013, p. 961).

In thinking about parental discipline of children, it is important to consider not only how but also *why* parents discipline or punish their children in particular ways. The present study has found that despite differences in preferred forms of discipline according to parental style, most participants use punishments towards their children because of the same reasons. Namely, majority of the interviewed parents stated that they use punishments because they want to raise well socialized and caring children. In addition, they often apply their own experiences of discipline and punishment, and they continue those into the next generation.

> "One should be a good child. One should behave well. You have to learn well. Your qualities should be as good as learning like that. I really like my child to be a good citizen. There is nothing else to do. That's why we do like this. Punishment and other all for this." (Authoritative_Father_Girl)

The present research has supported many findings from previous literature, which highlight the various factors that impact the development of different parenting styles. Among these is the way that adverse childhood experiences with one's own parents shape parenting behavior in adulthood. However, this study also suggests that in Sri Lankan society , there are cultural values and norms which provide crucial context for specific parenting practices and imbue them with unique meanings for parents. In light of the limited research that has been done on parenting styles in Sri Lanka and many other countries, the present study suggests that more research is needed into the four parenting styles and how they manifest in actual parental practices.

DISCUSSION?

4. CONCLUSIONS

Authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and uninvolved parenting styles have been the most researched and discussed parenting practices. The present research offers a number of findings concerning how childhood experiences, cultural preferences, and role models shape parental practices and parenting styles. The results are typical of contemporary psychological research: authoritative and permissive parents report having positive childhood parenting experiences as well as positive role models that have influenced their own parenting approach. Authoritarian and uninvolved parents report a majority of negative childhood parenting experiences and fewer positive role models. One striking finding, however, is that all participants irrespective of parenting style classification reported that they maintain a healthy, positive relationship with their children and emphasized that they always consider their children's wellbeing, future, and education.

Cultural preferences also vary within the main four parenting styles, particularly in regards to punishment, the use of Eastern and Western parenting practices, and parenting criteria. The study faces a limitation due to its purposive sampling method because such sampling does not reflect the average population and thus will impact the generalization of the results. Nevertheless, the study

reveals the significance of this area of research. There are very few research studies on parenting styles in the Sri Lankan context and globally, and the present study has pointed to fruitful directions for future parenting styles-based research to examine further the various factors and influences which shape parents' behavior. Also, we must consider not only general parenting practices but also unique parenting styles and practices which emerge in the Sri Lankan context. Finally, this study shows the importance of positive parenting-based programs in Sri Lanka and the use of counseling awareness programs to promote positive parenting.

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