

2001

Parenting styles in society today

Julie Hammond
University of Northern Iowa

Let us know how access to this document benefits you

Copyright ©2001 Julie Hammond

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.uni.edu/grp>



Part of the [Curriculum and Instruction Commons](#), and the [Family, Life Course, and Society Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Hammond, Julie, "Parenting styles in society today" (2001). *Graduate Research Papers*. 783.
<https://scholarworks.uni.edu/grp/783>

This Open Access Graduate Research Paper is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Work at UNI ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Graduate Research Papers by an authorized administrator of UNI ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@uni.edu.

Offensive Materials Statement: Materials located in UNI ScholarWorks come from a broad range of sources and time periods. Some of these materials may contain offensive stereotypes, ideas, visuals, or language.

Parenting styles in society today

Abstract

This paper is a review of parenting styles relative to the importance of childrearing practices. Its primary focus is to identify and examine parenting styles, which impacts childrearing methods. The authoritarian, permissive, and authoritative methods were identified with strengths and weaknesses compared.

From the comparison, it was determined that the authoritative parenting style provides the most success for childrearing in today's changing American society. The conclusion of the paper offers guidelines and suggestions to parents on establishing this childrearing method.

PARENTING STYLES IN SOCIETY TODAY

A Graduate Journal Article Proposal

Submitted to the

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

of the Requirement for the Degree

Masters of Arts in Early Childhood Education

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

By

Julie Hammond

December 21, 2001

This Journal Article by: Julie Hammond

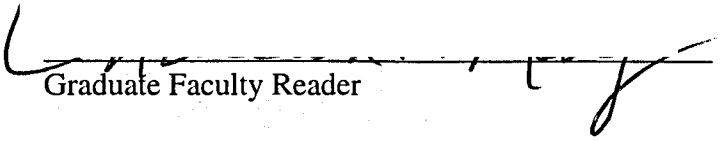
Title: Parenting Styles in Society Today

has been approved as meeting the research requirement for the
Degree of Masters of Arts in Education (or Masters of Arts in Education).

Charles R. May

12/17/01

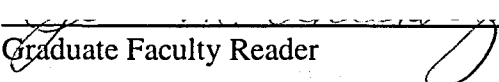
Date Approved


Graduate Faculty Reader

Jill M. Uhlenberg

12/17/01

Date Approved


Graduate Faculty Reader

Rick C. Traw

12/19/01

Date Approved


Head, Department of Curriculum and Instruction

ABSTRACT

This paper is a review of parenting styles relative to the importance of childrearing practices. Its primary focus is to identify and examine parenting styles, which impacts childrearing methods. The authoritarian, permissive, and authoritative methods were identified with strengths and weaknesses compared.

From the comparison, it was determined that the authoritative parenting style provides the most success for childrearing in today's changing American society. The conclusion of the paper offers guidelines and suggestions to parents on establishing this childrearing method.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	1
NEEDS OF PARENTS.....	1
PARENTING STYLES.....	2
GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS IN ESTABLISHING AN AUTHORITATIVE STYLE.....	6
SUMMARY.....	8

INTRODUCTION

Who has not cringed while listening to children manipulate, bargain, or control other children and adults when their parents try to get their attention or try to get them to respond appropriately to their requests? Who has seen a child bend the rules to gain some desired goal? Also, some children have learned to manipulate one parent against the other. When these situations occur, parents tend to be at a loss, for they may have tried methods that seemed logical, but did not work.

Correcting children's behaviors presents certain challenges. For starters, who wants other people to think their child is bossy, bratty, or even downright obnoxious? Yet, parents do not want to be embarrassed, nor do they want to embarrass their children in front of others.

NEEDS OF PARENTS

Rearing children is the most rewarding and daunting experience any human being can undertake. The primary goal of childrearing, which is to produce independent productive citizens, has always been an essential responsibility in our society. Rearing children can put a strain on the marriage. Parents are searching for guidance in childrearing, and with our twenty-first century lifestyles, it is important that parents continue to care about the basics of life (Friel & Friel, 1999). One way to improve childrearing practices is to recognize there are different styles of parenting, for parenting styles are different methods that are used in the childrearing process.

Even though childrearing has been and is a primary goal of parents, there are basically three different styles that are used. Friel and Friel (1999) stated that parents tend

to rear their children in the way they were reared, or if they did not have a happy childhood, they might rear their children in the opposite way from which they were reared. Examining the impact of parenting styles is essential for parents who want to improve their childrearing practices.

PARENTING STYLES

When parents search for books of wisdom on childrearing they will discover an infinite array of titles on the subject, which causes more confusion and concern about how to rear children than almost anything else they encounter. Educating one's self is the first step toward formulating expectations. Friel and Friel (1999) wrote that education tends to develop certain types of behavior and attitudes in children, and how a parent handles a young child is essential to our cultural pattern.

The conceptual approach to parent-child relations starts with the assumption that the physical, the cognitive, and the social development of children are largely a function of parental childrearing practices (Rolfe, 1998). A child's energy level, willingness to explore, will to master one's environment, self-control, and sociability are set not only by genetic structure, but also by regimen, stimulation, and the kind of contact provided by the parents (Baumrind, 1967). Young children learn from their parents how to think, to talk, to interpret, to control reactions, and how to influence others. The parents' use of reinforcement can alter the children behavior and may affect their future likes and dislikes. Parents differ in the degree to which they influence their children, the ability to communicate with, reason with, listen attentively to their children, and to influence the parents' overall effectiveness as teachers and models (Leman, 2000).

An expert in parenting, Diane Baumrind (1971), observed patterns of parental childrearing. From an analysis of the literature, Baumrind went beyond labeling parenting styles by examining outcomes of these styles on children as they proceeded through their early years to adolescence. She identified three parenting patterns; authoritarian, permissive, and authoritative. Baumrind and other experts described the three parenting styles in the following way: An authoritarian style is one in which the parent determines the policy and decisions of the family and sets specific goals for the child (Leman, 2000). Authoritarian parents favor a family which is hierarchical in style and stresses the virtue of obedience to one's elders (Lurie, 2000). The typical pattern in an authoritarian home is a pecking order that seems to indicate that men are better than women and adults are better than children (Leman, p. 37). Parents exert control over their children, but feel no need to supply reasoning for the limits they set (Dinwiddie, 2001). This parenting style mismatches a rapidly changing society, which values choice and innovation.

Experts have found one strength and many weaknesses in the authoritarian parenting style. The strength involves parents developing routines that create structure. Weaknesses include the child giving in to a superior power and a possible dependency on authority caused by too many limits and a fear of parents and failing (Baumrind, 1996). A typical result is that the children become isolated and disconnected from their parents (Friel & Friel, 1999). Children growing up under these conditions are found to be clingy, helpless, whiny and unable to make decisions that life requires (Leman, 2000). Nurturing and clear communication between parent and child are not valued. Children distinguish themselves as less trustful of others, less spontaneous, more assertive in play, and more reliant upon outside authorities (Dinwiddie, 2001). Children reared to follow

the parent will easily copy anyone, including undesirable peers.

The permissive method, the second parenting style, removes the parent from control in determining the policy and actions of the family (Lewin, 1948 & Baumrind, 1967). Children reared with a permissive parenting style are given freedom to do as they wish. They often cajole their parents into doing things for them, which they would otherwise be able to do for themselves (Lurie, 2000). In too many cases, children appear to be rearing themselves or to depend on siblings for support and guidance. Parents do not make the effort to set limits or make maturity demands, nor do they share ideas, opinions, and feelings with their children (Dinwiddie, 2001). Leman (2000) observed through years of counseling that permissiveness reaps rebellion. He further noted that children rebel because they feel anger and hatred toward their parents when there are not enough guidelines and limits.

At this time, experts have found no evidence of strengths for the permissive parenting style (Friel & Friel, 1999; Leman, 2000). However, weaknesses are numerous. These weaknesses occur when the child: (a) has no self-control, (b) has no self-discipline, (c) has a lack of structure, (d) has no self-esteem, (e) is overly independent, (f) is friends with the parents creating a weak boundary, and (g) is without clear limits which causes confusion, insecurity, and poor decision making choices.

The final parenting style is authoritative. The authoritative style is also known as a democratic approach in which every member of the family helps determine the families' policy, goals, and course of action (Lewin, 1948). Baumrind (1996) stated that authoritative parents are receptive to the child's views, but retain responsibility for guiding the child's action. They are sensitive to the child's emotional needs, by

emphasizing reasoning, by communicating, and by using rational discussion in interactions that are friendly. Control is clearly in the hands of the adult but is never exerted in a random or meaningless fashion (Lurie, 2000). This perspective is balanced between exclusively child-centered (permissive) and exclusively parent-centered (authoritarian), by giving children choices, while holding them accountable (Leman, 2000). An authoritative style seeks to integrate needs of the child with other family members, treating the rights and responsibilities of children and those of parents as complementary rather than as identical (Rolfe, 1998).

Covey (1997) described the authoritative parenting style as the flight of an airplane with a destination. The plan, decisions, deviations, adjustments, and constant feedback a pilot receives and communicates to make the right choice are the same elements for a family. The flight of the airplane is the ideal metaphor for life in an authoritative family.

The strengths for the authoritative parenting style are the development of the following in the children: awareness of the importance of communication, self-awareness, self-discipline, self-reliance, self-control, getting along with peers, feelings of security, love, acceptance, satisfaction in achievement and contribution, willingness to try and fail, and recognition of importance of rules and regulations. These children also showed less stereotypic gender behavior, with girls exhibiting more achievement oriented behavior and boys being more social and cooperative than average (Lurie, 2000). Also studies revealed that these children have higher self-esteem, more internalized moral standards, greater maturity, increased competence, and more academic success (Lurie, 2000). The final strength of authoritative parenting is the use of guidance and action-oriented

techniques that force children to accept responsibility and learn accountability for their actions (Leman, 2000).

The only weakness that has been found is that the authoritative parenting style is difficult to maintain (Leman, 2000; Rolfe, 1998). But with persistence, this maintenance can be achieved.

GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS IN ESTABLISHING AN AUTHORITATIVE STYLE

Guidelines give parents focus and directions in rearing their children. By using guidelines parents have a basis for decisions they make regarding their children.

Through studies and research, parenting experts have developed the following guidelines of childrearing practices for parents:

1. Parents need to address their past, when they evaluate their childrearing practices (Friel & Friel, 1999).

When parents reconcile their childhood ghosts, it is not about blaming anyone. It is about removing the blinders from their eyes so that they can stop being prisoners of automatic patterns they learned as children. They also need to be aware of what constitutes over-compensating for their own parents' parenting styles.

2. Every parent makes mistakes, but effective parents learn from them. (Rolfe, 1998).

Keeping this guideline in mind helps parents to take pressure off themselves to be perfect. Children who come from families where they are expected to become competent, but where they are also allowed to make mistakes,

can learn from them, and as a result they will develop into more capable children (Friel & Friel, 1999).

3. Parents need to give children responsibilities and hold them accountable for their actions (Leman, 2000).

Parents should be teaching their children that every day there are consequences for their actions, either positive or negative. Parents who respect children's choices enough to let them face their consequences are demonstrating accountability and responsibility for their actions. When clear limits are firmly enforced within the context of a rational-authoritative relationship during the early years, the need for punishment by mid-adolescence is minimized (Dinwiddie, 2001). It is at this time that the rights and responsibilities of parents and children become more symmetrical and less complementary.

4. Parents need to be consistent in order for their children to know what is expected of them (Covey, 1997; Friel & Friel, 1999).

When rules are enforced consistency children learn to follow them and build internal structures. It is this repetition that allows children to establish their own limits for self-governing. They will develop greater security than children who have not developed these internal structures.

5. Success in parenting will occur when all family members identify goals.

Once parents and children identify and agree upon goals, an action plan for appropriate behavior can be developed. The plan will establish structure and routine for everyone. This will ensure a shared vision that can be revisited several times.

6. Parents need to examine their own values and lifestyle (Friel & Friel, 1999; Leman, 2000; Rolfe, 1998).

Parents need to live by their values and be willing to make small, effective changes, if necessary. Parents' values are demonstrated to their children through their actions and their words.

7. Parents should show leadership, rather than ownership (Friel & Friel, 1999).

Parents are their children's guardians, custodians, and their guides. Good leadership includes love, care, and warmth, as well as providing structure and setting limits. If parents are good leaders, they will inspire their children to follow them.

8. The relationships in a family come before rules (Leman, 2000).

The rules find their ultimate value as expressions of the relationships within the family. These are the expectations of how family members will love one another. As children see that their parents are committed to the family, they will commit themselves, too.

SUMMARY

The guidelines help parents identify elements necessary to implement an authoritative parenting style. Too many rules and guidelines can be restrictive; whereas, too few rules and guidelines do not give enough direction and focus in childrearing (Leman, 2000). What is needed is for parents to explore in their own families the use of rules and guidelines. When parents discover unique patterns or principles of childrearing they can give themselves a fresh perspective. How a parent rears or manages the lifestyle

for children today is an essential element, not only of our existing cultural pattern, but will be reflected in the child's future endeavors in a changing world.

References

Baumrind, D. (1967). Child care practices anteceding three patterns of preschool behavior. Genetic Psychology Monographs, 75, 43-88.

Baumrind, D. (1971). Current patterns of parental authority. Developmental Psychology Monograph, 4(1), 1-67.

Baumrind, D. (1971). Harmonious parents and their preschool children. Developmental Psychology, 4(1), 99-102.

Baumrind, D. (1996). The discipline controversy revisited. Family Relations, 45, 405-414.

Covey, S. (1997). The seven habits of highly effectively families. New York: Golden Books.

Dinwiddie, S. Effective parenting styles: Why yesterday's models won't work today. Kidsource. Retrieved November 12, 2001 from <http://www.kidsource.com/better.world.press/parenting.html>

Friel, J. C., & Friel, L. D. (1999). The seven worst things parents do. Deerfield Beach, FL: Health Communications, Inc.

Leman, K. (2000). Making children mind without losing yours. Grand Rapids, MI: Fleming H. Revell.

Lewin, K. (1948). Resolving social conflicts. New York: Harper & Brothers Publishing.

Lurie, B. (2000). What is your parenting style? Small Talk. Retrieved November 12, 2001 from <http://www.city.davis.ca.us/parks/childcare/smalltalk/smalltalk-2000janfeb.pdf>

Rolfe, R. (1998). The seven secrets of successful parents. Chicago, IL:

Contemporary Books.