
COMPREHENDING PARENTING STYLES ACROSS THE WORLD

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ABSTRACT

Parenting is the process of promoting and supporting the physical, emotional, social, and intellectual development of a child from infancy to adulthood. Parenting style is a psychological construct that is defined as standard strategies used by parents to bring up their children. Despite the fact that parents may differ in the ways they control or communicate with their children, it is assumed that the primary care of all parents is to socialize, teach, and promote the physical and emotional development of their children. Parents' emotional expressiveness and the emotional climate that they create through their parenting styles provide guidelines to children regarding the use of emotion in the regular everyday social interactions. It is no surprise that different countries have wide-ranging differences in culture, cuisine, and entertainment. It looks like even parenting styles can vary vastly from one country to another. So in this article, the author points out various parenting styles namely proximal parenting style, distal parenting style, authoritative parenting style, French Parenting and authoritarian parenting style which are followed in India, Japan, America, France, United Kingdom, Russia and Japan. The goal of this article is to better understand how different parenting processes and behaviors interact to affect various child outcomes in different social contexts.

Keywords: Parenting Style, authoritative, authoritarian, French Parenting, Proximal Parenting, Distal Parenting.

Introduction

Parenting is the process of promoting and supporting the physical, emotional, social, and intellectual development of a child from infancy to adulthood. Parenting style is a psychological construct that is defined as standard strategies used by parents to bring up their children. Despite the fact that parents may differ in the ways they control or communicate with their children, it is assumed that the primary care of all parents is to socialize, teach, and promote the physical and emotional development of their children. Parents' emotional expressiveness and the emotional climate that they create through their parenting styles provide guidelines to children regarding the use of emotion in the regular everyday social interactions. It is no surprise that different countries have wide-ranging differences in culture, cuisine, and entertainment. It looks like even parenting styles can vary vastly from one country to another.

Parenting Style in India

The Importance of Family Support: Though the concept of nuclear families has gained a lot of momentum over the past couple of years in India, the extended family still plays a significant part in the upbringing of Indian children. The elders in the family (grandparents), along with the parents play a huge role in the lives of Indian children, right from choosing their name to imparting life lessons to them. **Focus on Academics:** Most Indian parents are very particular about their children faring well, academically. They lay greater emphasis on academics and theoretical learning than they do on extra-curricular activities like sports, art, and other hobbies. This has a lot to do with the fact that India is a developing country with a huge population problem. *Conservative Approach:* Substance abuse like smoking, drugs and alcohol consumption is considered against Indian culture and many Indian parents ensure that their kids abstain from these habits all their life. Sex is another topic not openly discussed in Indian households, especially with kids. Over the past couple of years, however, many Indian schools have started to impart sex education to high school students in the light of the ever-growing population and children's lack of knowledge. *Discipline:* Indian parents have no qualms about being strict with their kids if the situation demands. Discipline is one of the greatest factors responsible for the hardworking nature of Indian kids. Very rarely do Indian parents tend to get over-indulgent with their kids. The kids are often taught to earn and deserve what they get. For example – if a child performs well in school, he is rewarded. Similarly, if he performs badly, he is punished. *Life Values:* In India, children are taught to give immense importance and respect to elders along with the importance of religion and worship. India boasts of a diverse and rich cultural heritage, with the presence of numerous religions, mainly Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, and Sikhism. Many families follow the practice of conducting daily prayer rituals at home as a tribute to their religious Gods and Goddesses. Some Indian parents also read out stories from their holy books to impart essential life morals of gratitude, generosity, nobleness and helpfulness in their kids.

Parenting Style in Japan

Heidi Keller is known for identifying two types of parenting styles: **proximal and distal**. In short, the **proximal parenting style** is associated with consistent and prolonged body contact between the mother and child, while the **distal parenting style's** emphasis is more on eye contact

and communication through facial expression and words. **Proximal parenting style is common in Japan.** So, things like co-sleeping, co-bathing, and play focused on physical contact between mother and child, are very much the norm. Japanese mothers are also known for proactively predicting the needs of their child, making the prevention of fuss a high priority. Japanese mothers are also with their children, almost always, for the first two years of life. To understand the consequences of the typical Japanese parenting style (proximal parenting style), it's first important to understand the term *self-regulation*. *Self-regulation* refers to the ability to control and monitor one's own emotions, behaviors, thoughts and attention. Heidi Keller found a **high correlation between a proximal parenting style (Japanese parenting style) and the early development of self-regulation.** So, in general, Japanese children are better at self-regulation than most Western children, earlier on in life. Keller also found a **high correlation between distal parenting style (Western parenting style) and the early development of self-recognition.** *Self-recognition* is the ability to understand that one's thoughts and emotions are different from others' in the world.

Parenting Style in America

In the United States, what most people consider good parenting is based on middle class European American behaviors. These behaviors include displays of warmth and closeness balanced with monitoring and control. For White Americans, the parenting style most related to psychological well-being for adolescents is called authoritative parenting. The authoritative parenting style was first defined by Diane Baumrind, who proposed a new system for classifying parents. Authoritative parenting is a combination of love and limits. They also nurture their children, demonstrate affection and support, and are open to discussion on any of their expectations. Authoritative parents are assertive and in firm control but they are not intrusive or restrictive. Authoritative parenting may mean that the parents have a lot of behavior control, but there is no psychological control. They do not use methods of emotional blackmail, withdrawal of love, bringing in feelings of guilt or other negative tactics with their children. They believe in nurturing their children and in open communication but do exercise firm control. Authoritative parenting makes children self-disciplined, assertive and socially responsible. They are open and communicative with their parents. They may question and want to discuss their parents' instructions but are cooperative. Authoritative parenting ensures that children grow up into competent individuals with a high sense of self-esteem. They have good social skills and are confident in most environments. Even as young adults they show high academic achievement and psychosocial development with few behavioral problems.

Parenting Style in France

French parenting is quite a controversial type of parenting style where French parents reportedly impose much stricter rules than other parents. As a matter of fact, Leah McFall explained that French parents' strict way of parenting is a result of seeing their children as "rational beings that can understand that some behaviors have no practical value." When a baby cries in other parts of the world, the most common response for a parent is to jump up and see why the baby is crying, especially in the middle of the night. However, in France, this is not the case. French people give their baby a few minutes to cry themselves back to sleep rather than racing down the hall to hush

their baby with a bottle or a pacifier. *Provide Freedom, With Boundaries*: The basic gist of French parenting is to set boundaries and give kids freedom within those boundaries. That empowers them to make choices and allows them to grow as individuals, while not overwhelming them with all the choices available." *Frustration is a good thing*: The children should experience it. That's how one truly develops coping skills. *Patience is a virtue*: Teaching children to wait for dinner, for a parent's attention, or for a teacher to answer a question helps them to tolerate delays without indignation or anxiety. *Adult time is valid and necessary and does not have to be justified*: It helps show kids that Mom and Dad have a life outside their beloved offspring's constant demands. All of which teaches them about balancing needs. *Family time is important*: Even if family dinners every evening are not possible, schedule at least a few every week. On the weekends, even when kids are off to birthday parties or soccer practice, make sure to schedule a family dinner or lunch followed by a walk, bike ride, or time at the park. *The French are big on manner*: Kids, whether they are shy or not, are expected to introduce themselves, say hello, goodbye, thank you, and basically behave at the table, even when surrounded by their friends.

Parenting Style in United Kingdom

Parents and young people in the study were in conspicuous agreement about 'good' parenting, describing it in terms of being warm and affectionate, but also setting boundaries and standards for children. This conformed closely to the model of 'authoritative' parenting that research in Europe and America suggests is likely to promote children's healthy development and wellbeing. *Communication is key*: According to a UK.Care.com story, British parents are more likely to rationalize with their children and incorporate their children into problem solving when dealing with a sticky situation. British parents will lay out, step-by-step, what went wrong and why the behavior shouldn't be repeated. *Minding manners*: British children are expected to demonstrate a mild-mannered demeanor, be polite and academically proficient. "This combination of conservative and liberal techniques aims to produce well-adjusted children," the article states.

Parenting Style in Russia

Children, known as "dyetski" in Russian, are treasured and fiercely protected by their families. Regardless of social standing or economic status, Russian parents do their utmost to provide their offspring with treats, special gifts and loving attention. The Russian mother plays the primary role in raising, teaching and caring for children, and most mothers regard this as a near-sacred duty. Parenting styles in Russia are based on Russian mentality, way of life, traditions and current environmental situation and thus may differ from the parenting patterns of other countries. The phrase "helicopter parent" is frequently used in the United States to describe a parent who hovers over her children, staying involved in all aspects of their lives and never straying far from their sides. This phrase describes many Russian mothers as well, who display fierce dedication to their children. The mother-knows-best approach leads to displays of over protectiveness, particularly in public, but seldom in a bossy or smothering way. Russian moms typically dote on their children and make it their life's work to provide their children with the best clothing, best music lessons and frequent tasty treats.

Parenting Style in China

Confucianism has been said to be the most influential philosophy upon Chinese culture and the functioning of family life itself. Confucian ethics not only convey appropriate child-rearing expectations and effective child-rearing techniques, but also what are regarded as valuable qualities in children. The focus upon the family, the responsibility of parenthood and the duty to raise well-adjusted children is highly prioritised within this framework. Chinese culture encompasses a collectivist approach, which prioritises the group (be it the family, society or state) as opposed to the needs, wishes and desires of the individual. In maintaining group unity and harmonious interpersonal relationships, obedience to authority, self-control and compliance seem to be expected in a more consistent and absolute manner by Chinese parents. Many Chinese parents placed greater emphasis on obedience, proper conduct, moral training and the acceptance of social obligations, as opposed to the development of children's independence, assertiveness and creativity. Within Chinese culture, physical childrearing approaches are seen to encourage the integrity of the child rather than as a punishment. Traditional Chinese values not only emphasize child obedience and parental strictness, which are attributes of an authoritarian parenting style, but also promote parental acceptance and responsiveness, which are characteristics of an authoritative parenting style. Generally, Chinese parents are immensely devoted to their children; they sacrifice much to meet their children's needs and they provide ample affection and warmth, two characteristics of an authoritative parenting style. Thus, authoritative and authoritarian parenting styles are intertwined with the Chinese value system.

Conclusion

Parents play an irreplaceable role in the lives of their children. Without parents, the growing up phase of children would decrease in speed. Parenting style is shaped by the parent's developmental history, education, and personality; the child's behavior; and the immediate and broader context of the parent's life. Also, the parent's behavior is influenced by the parent's work, the parents' marriage, family finances, and other conditions likely to affect the parent's behavior and psychological well-being. In addition, parents in different cultures, from different social classes, and from different ethnic groups rear their children differently. In any event, children's behavior and psychological development are linked to the parenting style with which they are raised. Parenting styles in different countries are different. But cultural gaps aside, parenting is bound to imperfection. One similarity is certain: All parents want what's best for their family. The goal of this article is to better understand how different parenting processes and behaviors interact to affect various child outcomes in different social contexts.

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