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Parenting styles and their impacts on children: A comparative study

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Abstract

Parenting and the parenting style each parent adopts play a crucial role in shaping the personality and behavior of children (Wenar C & Kerig P 2000). According to Clarke-Stewart, A. (2006), parenting style refers to the set of activities aimed at the smooth care and development of children. Parental care involves children, parents, and other family members in continuous interaction throughout life. Thus, exploring the type of parenting used by the parent plays a significant role in understanding children's behaviors. There are many parenting styles; however, this paper presents the democratic-permissive type and the authoritarian. Additionally, their differences and the possible effects on children are highlighted.

Keywords: Parenting Styles; Children; Effects; Behavior

1. Introduction

1.1. The Democratic-Permissive Parenting Type

Initially, the democratic-permissive parenting style encourages children to develop autonomy and initiative and to freely express their opinion (Spera 2005). Parents following this behavior style are affectionate and supportive of their children, showing their presence in their lives (Zenakou 2009). The democratic parenting style includes a high level of control and support, guiding children's behavior through explaining family rules and encouraging healthy dialogue and counterargument with reasoning. As they grow up with parents using this style, children develop the ability to negotiate and communicate effectively, making them more socially responsible and autonomous individuals in the future.

Furthermore, children develop social skills, maintain good relationships with their peers, and have good school performance. The democratic type promotes positive characteristics of children as democratic parents provide guidelines for controlling the child's behavior according to their age and offer logical explanations for the limits set. In this way, children better understand parental expectations and respond to them. Additionally, democratic parents impose strict rules and seek obedience, but at the same time, they use two-way communication with their children and show them the way to succeed. They also provide opportunities for children to earn their sincere praise (Patterson 2009).

1.2. The Authoritarian Parenting Type

In contrast to the democratic parenting style, there is the authoritarian style, which emphasizes control and adherence to rules (Papalia Duskin & Wendkos 2006). Parents following this type have high expectations. They are also emotionally distant and rarely communicate with their children. They also impose some punishment in cases of non-compliance with the rules (Patterson 2009). Authoritarian parents seek to impose a desired behavior on their children (Altschul, Gershoff, & Lee 2016).

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2. Basic Differences Between the Two Parenting Styles

Consequently, the main differences between these two types are that authoritarian parents prefer parental control and limit their children's independence, while democratic parents encourage this independence. Authoritarian parents use aggressive one-way communication, discouraging the expression of feelings of independence and autonomy in their children, while democratic parents offer support and encourage the expression of these elements (Aloia & Warren 2019; Williams 2009; Yaffe 2018).

Authoritarian parents are characterized by a lack of communication and adopt authoritarian strategies such as interventionism, criticism, reprimand, and threat. Moreover, the emotional atmosphere is cold and hostile (Clark 2015; Liu & Guo 2010; Marcone 2018; Yaffe 2018; Williams 2009). On the contrary, democratic parents encourage their children's independence and provide support (Aloia & Warren 2019; Yaffe 2018). They also try to understand the needs of the children, inspiring love and devotion, creating an environment that encourages development. They focus on providing explanations, setting realistic goals, and openly accepting the views of the children. The atmosphere they create is positive and encouraging, providing children with the opportunity to freely express their ideas through dialogue and discussion. Finally, they give incentives for achieving personal successes.

3. The Effects on Children from Parenting Types

These approaches have certain effects on children. Regarding the democratic-permissive, it has been observed that a high level of dialectical parental style is associated with reduced internalized symptoms and risky behavior, increased ability to regulate behavior, an increase in the child's perception of acceptance from their peers, and generally a smooth adjustment to their environment (Alizadeth 2011; Bagán 2019; Chung 2019; Marcone 2018; Windle 2010). Democratic parents have expectations from their children but also express supportive behavior towards them. This results in the development of self-confidence and responsibility in children, reducing problematic behaviors, increasing social skills, and improving their academic performance. Thus, children growing up with democratic parents are more independent and cooperative with their peers. Additionally, the democratic parenting type helps children to be more compassionate and interested in other people (Mesurado & Richaud 2017).

Regarding children of authoritarian parents, it is observed that they are hostile and shy with their peers, dependent on their parents, anxious, and indecisive. According to Moore & Eisenberg (1984), the authoritarian parenting approach is negatively associated with the positive social development of children. The authoritarian parenting type is associated with an inability to control behavior, low self-esteem, reduced social skills, difficulties in adaptation, and depression (Alizadeth 2011; Bagán 2019; Chung 2019; Marcone 2018).

4. Conclusion

Concluding from all the above, it is understood that the way parents interact with their children significantly affects their behavior, socialization, and the formation of their personality. Children's behavior is affected by the climate in the family (Kuczynski, L 2003). The democratic type is more related to development in a supportive environment, children comply with social standards, have positive social behavior, take responsibility for their actions, feel adequate, and have self-confidence.

Conversely, the authoritarian type is associated with strict control, problematic adaptation of children, lack of independence, reduced social skills, and less sociability (McKinney, C., Milone, M. C., Renk, K. 2011). Finally, adopting parenting types characterized by understanding, support for the child, communication, encouragement, but also the required parental monitoring without punishment is very important for the development of children's personality, their behavior, and their smooth integration into society. Through this approach, children can evolve as responsible and conscious citizens.

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