

Impact of ecological environment on maternal parenting style

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■ **ABSTRACT** : The study was conducted in Hisar district of state Haryana. The objective of the study was to assess the impact of ecological perspectives on maternal parenting style. A sample comprised of 100 mothers of children in the age group of 7-8 years. The results revealed that associations. It was significantly associated with father education, mother education, and caste. It was also found maternal parenting was significantly associated with home environment and its all the aspects viz., responsivity, encouragement of maturity, emotional climate, learning materials and opportunities, enrichment, and family companionship except family integration and physical environment. Half of the mothers were authoritative and authoritarian followed by permissive mothers.

■ **KEY WORDS**: Maternal parenting, Socio-personal, Home environment

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An infant sees the world through her parent's eyes; she tries to imbibe everything she recognises in her parents. Thus, a parent-child relationship lays the foundation of the 'building of her life'. Parenting is the bringing up of a child. It is like the nourishment that is necessary for a sapling to grow into a big and fruitful tree. The construct of parenting style is used to capture normal variations in parents' attempts to control and socialize their children. Parents fall into one of three categories of parenting styles; authoritarian (telling their children exactly what to do), indulgent (allowing their children to do whatever they wish) and authoritative (providing rules and guidance without being overbearing (Baumrind, 1991). Parenting style captures two important elements of parenting: parental responsiveness

and parental demandingness (Maccoby and Martin, 1983). Parents categorized according to parental demandingness and responsiveness which creates a typology of four parenting styles: authoritarian, authoritative, permissive and uninvolved (Maccoby and Martin, 1983).

The role of a father is important, but not as important as a mother. Parenting as a mother is far more difficult than parenting as a father. Mother is the one who is very close to the child. It takes a lot of time, money and energy to bring up a good and healthy child.

Parental socio-ecological system also influenced their adaptation of parenting style and it directly affects their children's developmental aspects. There are so many factors like parental' education, occupation,

number of siblings, background, status, health, ethnicity etc. which affect their rearing style of parents. Keeping the above in view, an attempt is made to find out the influence of ecological perspectives on maternal parenting style.

RESEARCH METHODS

The present study was conducted in Hisar city purposively due to easy accessibility. The sample consisted of 100 mothers of the children in the age group of 7 to 8 years were selected randomly. Two types of variables *i.e.* independent and dependent were taken. Socio-personal and home environment were taken as independent variables and parenting style was taken as dependent variable. Interview Schedule was developed and used for the socio-personal variable. The Home Observation Measurement of the Environment (HOME) by Bradley and Caldwell (1984) was used to judge the environmental conditions of home through their children. The Parenting Styles and Dimensions Questionnaire by Robinson *et al.* (1995) was used for measurement of the three parenting styles. The responses

obtained through children were analyzed with the help of suitable statistical measures to draw required inferences.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the present study as well as relevant discussion have been presented under following heads :

Distribution of parents according to parenting styles:

Table 1 represented the distribution of mothers according to their parenting styles. It was found that 40 per cent mothers of children were perceived as authoritative and 40 per cent mothers of children were perceived as authoritarian parenting style followed by permissive parenting style (20%).

Associations of socio-personal variable with maternal parenting styles :

The data in the Table 2 showed the associations of maternal parenting styles. It was not significantly associated with ordinal position of child ($\chi^2=5.68$), number of offsprings ($\chi^2=1.88$), occupation of husband

Sr. No.	Maternal parenting styles	Frequency and percentages
1.	Authoritative	40 (40.0)
2.	Authoritarian	40 (40.0)
3.	Permissive	20 (20.0)

Socio- personal variable	Parenting styles	Authoritative	Authoritarian	Permissive	Total	χ^2 value
Ordinal position of child						
First born		14	19	7	40	5.68
Second born		17	15	5	37	
Third and above		9	6	8	23	
Total		40	40	20	100	
No. of offspring						
One		11	11	7	29	1.88
Two		16	17	5	38	
Three and more		13	12	8	33	
Total		40	40	20	100	
Occupation of husband						
Labour/farming		5	8	6	19	4.7
Business/Self employment		23	19	6	48	
Services		12	13	8	33	
Total		40	40	20	100	

Table 2 contd...

Contd..... Table 2

Occupation of husband					
Labour/farming	5	8	6	19	4.7
Business/Self employment	23	19	6	48	
Services	12	13	8	33	
Total	40	40	20	100	
Occupation of respondent					
Home maker	32	32	14	78	0.93
Working	8	8	6	22	
Total	40	40	20	100	
Education of husband					
Up to middle	6	16	7	29	9.77*
Higher school to Senior secondary school	15	16	8	39	
Graduate / post graduate	19	8	5	32	
Total	40	40	20	100	
Education of respondent					
Up to middle	11	27	10	48	13.15*
Higher school to Senior secondary school	16	6	5	27	
Graduate / post graduate	13	7	5	25	
Total	40	40	20	100	
Family income					
Up to 15,000 Rs.	8	12	5	25	8.69
15,001-50,000 Rs.	10	17	10	37	
More than 50,000 Rs.	22	11	5	38	
Total	40	40	20	100	
Family type					
Nuclear	24	21	12	57	0.55
Joint	16	19	8	43	
Total	40	40	20	100	
Family size					
Small (up to 5 members)	21	15	9	45	4.12
Medium (6-8 members)	7	15	6	28	
Large (more than 8 members)	12	10	5	27	
Total	40	40	20	100	
Caste					
Schedule caste	5	15	7	27	15.6*
Backward caste	12	18	7	37	
General	23	7	6	36	
Total	40	40	20	100	

*indicates significance of value at P=0.05

($\chi^2=4.7$), respondent's occupation ($\chi^2=0.93$), family income ($\chi^2=8.69$), family type ($\chi^2=0.55$) and family size ($\chi^2=4.12$) whereas husband's education ($\chi^2=9.77^*$), respondent's education ($\chi^2=13.15^*$), and caste ($\chi^2=15.6^*$) were significantly related to maternal parenting styles.

Associations of home environment with maternal parenting styles :

Maternal parenting was significantly associated with home environment perceived by their children and its all the aspects *viz.*, responsively ($\chi^2=46.76^*$), encouragement given to children (6.39^*), emotional climate (7.61^*) provided in the family.

More over maternal parenting style was also influential factor for providing learning materials (19.95*) and opportunities (15.88*), enrichment (18.88*), and family companionship (17.4*) as indicated in Table 3.

The associations of maternal parenting styles were significantly associated with education of husband, respondent education and caste of the family. Kotchick

and Forehand (2002) reported that factors, viz., ethnicity/culture, family socio-economic status and neighborhood/community influenced parenting. Fox *et al.* (1995) found the negative influences of less positive parenting with low income and low education of parents on behaviour of children whereas same was moderated by more educated with high income parents.

Maternal parenting style was significantly

Table 3 : Associations of home environment with maternal parenting styles (n=100)

Parenting styles	Authoritative	Authoritarian	Permissive	Total	χ^2 value
Aspects of home environment					
Responsivity					
Low	6	12	9	27	6.39*
High	34	28	11	73	
Total	40	40	20	100	
Encouragement of maturity					
Low	6	17	5	28	7.61*
High	34	23	15	72	
Total	40	40	20	100	
Emotional climate					
Low	6	24	12	42	19.95*
High	34	16	8	58	
Total	40	40	20	100	
Learning materials and opportunities					
Low	8	25	11	44	15.88*
High	32	15	9	56	
Total	40	40	20	100	
Enrichment					
Low	11	29	14	54	18.88*
High	29	11	6	46	
Total	40	40	20	100	
Family companionship					
Low	6	23	11	40	17.4*
High	34	17	9	60	
Total	40	40	20	100	
Family integration					
Low	11	14	8	33	1.06
High	29	26	12	67	
Total	40	40	20	100	
Physical environment					
Low	6	15	6	27	5.25
High	34	25	14	73	
Total	40	40	20	100	
Composite home environment					
Low	5	34	15	54	46.76*
High	35	6	5	46	
Total	40	40	20	100	

* indicates significance of values at P=0.05

associated with home environment perceived by their children and it's all the aspects viz., responsivity, encouragement of maturity, emotional climate, learning materials and opportunities, enrichment, and family companionship. Similar work related to the present study was also carried out by Thakur *et al.* (2011) and Uma and Devi (2004).

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