

# To study the parenting styles of fathers of early adolescents

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■ **ABSTRACT** : The present study was undertaken to assess the parenting styles of father of early adolescent. The study was conducted in the municipal limits of Udaipur city. The total sample comprised of 120 fathers of early adolescents belonging to middle income group. Parenting style questionnaire developed by Robinson *et al.* (1995) was modified and used for data collection. The results revealed that fathers of early adolescents followed authoritative parenting style. Hence it was found that fathers were not very strict and were not very lenient and had good relationship with their adolescents.

■ **KEY WORDS**: Adolescence, Parenting styles, Father

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The origin of the word “adolescence” is from the Latin verb ‘adolescere’, which means, “to grow up.” It can be defined as the transitional stage of development between childhood and adulthood, representing the period of time during which a person is biologically adult but emotionally has not attained at full maturity. Adolescence is a time which may be divided into 3 phases – Preadolescence, early adolescence and late adolescence.

During adolescence, a key developmental task is establishing autonomy. Some adolescents are more successful at this than others, and some parents are better at fostering adolescents’ autonomy than others. Greater parental knowledge of the adolescents’ whereabouts, friends, and activities can be considered an indicator of an effective autonomy balance, as parents grant adolescents autonomy and adolescents respond by keeping parents informed. Psychological control, in contrast, can be considered a restriction of autonomy or

an intrusion by parents into adolescents’ establishment of autonomy. Most of the parents usually develop their own parenting style usually based upon amalgamation of factors such as children’s temperament and parenting style influenced by their own upbringing, what they observed in other families, what they have been trained and the surrounding culture. There is no hard and fast rule about parenting. It usually evolves with the passage of time as children grow up and develop their personalities. The quality of parenting is an important influence on children’s intellectual, emotional and social development (Nevid, 2009). According to Baumrind (1991), there are four types of parenting styles, varying along these two dimensions: authoritative parenting, associated with a high level of demandingness and rules with high responsiveness to the child; authoritarian parenting linked to high demandingness but low responsiveness characterized by rules but with less influence from the child’s needs; indulgent parenting

combining low demandingness and high responsiveness with few rules but high engagement with the child's needs; and uninvolved parenting which is associated with both low demandingness and low responsiveness.

The dramatic changes of puberty and adolescence may make it difficult for parents to rely on their children's preadolescent behaviour to predict future behaviour. For example, adolescent children who were compliant in the past may become less willing to cooperate without what they feel is a satisfactory explanation. Today more than ever, early adolescence is a phase that needs intensive care and support to help the child adjust to this phenomenon in their lives, and it requires understanding an adolescent's physical, attitudinal, and psycho-social changes during adolescence. Parents accurately perceiving that children are behaving differently than in late childhood may take the behavior in their adolescent children as resistant and oppositional. They may then respond to this perceived lack of cooperation with increasing pressure for future compliance, which adolescents experience as a reduction in their autonomy, just when they want more. Positive parent and child relationship is the foundation of healthy home environment and school environment. Parents need to accept and respect the teen as an individual totally and unconditionally. A child/adolescent needs to be valued no matter how s/he looks or behaves. A good relationship between a parent and a child facilitates positive behaviours on the child's part, therefore reducing indiscipline and enhancing positive self-concept of the adolescent. Parents serve as role models for their children by being sensitive and responsive to each one and by showing interest in each child and in his/her experiences. By guiding, supporting, listening, questioning and supplying appropriate information that encourages teenagers to think for themselves. When parents facilitate and encourage exploration, they help teenagers to develop a sense of accomplishment. Parenting is indeed one of the most impactful things that can influence a child and his behavior to a very large extent. Your parenting styles can impact on your child's social, physical, psychological, mental and emotional growth and development, which stays with the child even when he turns into an adult. This largely happens because the children learn from what is around them and what they see in their surroundings. Since the parents are always around their children, hence their behavior and actions have a great

impact on the child. The impacts can be either negative or positive. Parenting style is a general behavioral construct which sets the emotional context within which parents and children interact.

### Objective of the study:

- To study the parenting styles of fathers of early adolescents

### ■ RESEARCH METHODS

The present study was conducted under the municipal limits of Udaipur city. The total sample of the present study consisted of 120 fathers of early adolescents belonging to middle income group. Parenting style questionnaire developed by Robinson *et al.* (1995) was modified by the researcher to make it suitable and was used for data collection. The data was collected from school visits. Investigator contacted early adolescents from age 11-13 years and their fathers. Average mean was calculated to depict the style of parenting fathers were following *i.e.* authoritative, authoritarian, permissive and uninvolved.

### ■ RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results obtained from the present investigation as well as relevant discussion have been summarized under following heads :

#### The parenting styles of fathers of early adolescents:

The objective of the study is to find out the parenting styles of fathers of early adolescents. The assessment of parenting styles followed by fathers is been presented in the Fig. 1.

Fig. 1 is a bar graph it shows the assessment of father's parenting style. The y-axis of the figure indicates four types of parenting: authoritative, authoritarian, permissive and uninvolved. As can be seen from the Fig. 1 most of the fathers follow authoritative style of parenting and regarding authoritative and permissive there was not much difference between these two styles of parenting. Only 1.97 average mean marks were calculated for the father's following uninvolved parenting style. Fathers generally have high expectations from their children and they continuously support and encourage them to excel. Fathers prepare their children for the real world and he tend to focus on challenging task and less on how the child is feeling *i.e.* whether he or she is feeling good or

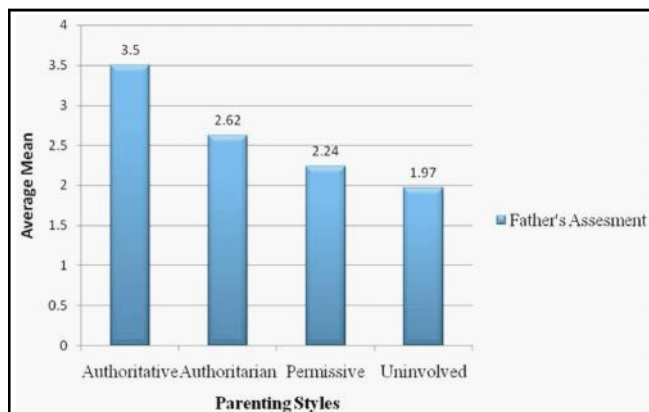


Fig. 1 : Father's Assessment

not.

Gogolinski (2012) found that authoritarian parenting leads to a competitive environment in which parents discourage spontaneity and support within the parent-child relationship decreases. In contrast, authoritative parenting was found to lead to a cooperative environment in which parents encourage spontaneity and support within the parent-child relationship increases.

Aesenio and Santos (2013) found in a sample of parents with school age children, that father's involvement in care was associated with an authoritative parenting style, while father's involvement in discipline domain was associated with authoritative or authoritarian styles, both based on high level of demand for the child.

Here we can see that most of the fathers follow authoritative parenting style that clearly shows that fathers provide continuous supports to their children that greatly help them in reaching and meeting their goals. They expect a fair amount of discipline from their children. They also believe in punishing their children, but the punishments are not very harsh or violent on the kid. They also provide unconditional love to their child. Fathers following permissive style of parenting are not strict and do not teach them life lessons. There is not much difference between permissive and uninvolved parenting styles followed by fathers. Kazmi *et al.* (2011)'s study explored the impact of the father's style of dealing with the children at home and the latter's academic achievements at school and result were in favor of fathers' involvement for academic achievements.

Fathers play an important role in a child's development from birth through adulthood. In fact, numerous studies have reached the same conclusions:

children with involved fathers have an advantage socially and academically over children with distant or no relationships with their dads. Evolutionary theorist use the term investment to signal that fathers make a range of direct and indirect contributions to children across multiple domains of childrearing, such as providing material resources and direct care giving, protecting children from harm, transferring knowledge, maintaining children's homes, preserving kin networks and economically, socially preserving kin networks and economically, socially or emotionally supporting children's mothers. A study by Shalini and Balakrishna Acharya (2013) indicate a major change taking place in Indian families especially the role of fathers in bringing up emotionally intelligent children. This has implications for future parenting. More boys will adopt an authoritative approach to parenting in future thereby reducing the adjustment and emotional problems in adolescence. Parenting programmes in schools can emphasize the importance of father's involvement and adoption of an authoritative approach in bringing up emotionally intelligent children.

### Conclusion:

The results indicate that most of the fathers follow authoritative and permissive style of parenting. It is best parenting style parents can use to raise their children it's because authoritative parenting style is very flexible and doesn't impose very strict rules and regulations. Fathers help their children to survive and learn new task and how to overcome new challenges of life.

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