

Perceived Parenting-Response Patterns and Adolescent Behaviour: An Exploratory Cross-Sectional Study of Adolescents Aged 13-18 Years

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Abstract: *This exploratory cross-sectional study examined associations between adolescents' perceptions of parenting-response patterns and self-reported behavioural, emotional, and social-adjustment experiences. An online questionnaire was submitted by 83 respondents; 75 responses met the minimum-completion criterion and were retained for analysis. Seven parenting items were used to derive descriptive response patterns- authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, or mixed/tied- and ten outcome items represented anger, emotional difficulties, and social-adjustment experiences. The largest groups were authoritarian-pattern (n=33) and authoritative-pattern (n=31), followed by permissive-pattern (n=6) and mixed/tied (n=5). The mean overall directional difficulty score was 1.67 for the authoritative-pattern group and 2.10 for the authoritarian-pattern group. Spearman rank correlations showed significant associations between parenting-response patterns and several outcome domains. Kruskal-Wallis comparisons showed statistically significant group differences for emotional difficulty, social-adjustment difficulty, and overall difficulty, while the anger comparison did not reach the conventional 0.05 threshold. Because the study is cross-sectional and uses a project-specific questionnaire rather than a documented validated diagnostic instrument, the findings describe associations and should not be interpreted as causal effects or clinical diagnoses.*

Keywords: parenting-response patterns; adolescence; adolescent behaviour; emotional difficulties; social adjustment; cross-sectional study

1. Introduction

Adolescence is a developmental period in which family relationships, autonomy, emotional regulation, peer relationships, and school adjustment interact. Parenting style has traditionally been discussed through dimensions such as responsiveness, demandingness, behavioural control, and autonomy support. Baumrind's foundational work and later family-socialisation models distinguish authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive patterns, while subsequent research has examined how parenting dimensions relate to adjustment and behavioural or emotional difficulties. The present dissertation examines adolescents' perceptions of parenting responses rather than testing a causal model. The study was developed to describe response patterns within the available sample and to explore whether these patterns were associated with selected indicators of anger, emotional difficulty, and social adjustment. This framing is important because cross-sectional data do not establish temporal direction. Adolescents' difficulties may relate to parenting responses, parenting responses may relate to adolescent experiences, or both may be associated with other family, peer, school, or individual factors.

2. Objectives

The objectives were to: (1) describe parenting-response patterns reported by adolescents aged 13–18 years; (2) describe selected behavioural, emotional, and social-adjustment experiences; (3) examine associations between parenting-response patterns and selected adolescent outcome domains; and (4) compare outcome scores across the descriptive parenting-response groups.

3. Method

Design and participants. The study used an exploratory cross-sectional online questionnaire. Eighty-three forms were submitted, of which 75 met the stated minimum-completion criterion and were retained for analysis. The available sample was treated as an exploratory project sample rather than a probability sample; therefore, the results should not be interpreted as population prevalence estimates. **Measures and coding.** Seven parenting items (Q4–Q10) addressed rules, communication, expectations, discipline, autonomy, affection, and academic involvement. Responses were content-coded into authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, or mixed/tied patterns. Ten items (Q11–Q20) were directionally coded to represent anger, emotional difficulty, social-adjustment difficulty, and an overall difficulty composite. The questionnaire was a project-specific item set, so the study does not claim the psychometric or diagnostic properties of a validated clinical scale. Statistical analysis. Frequencies and descriptive statistics were calculated. Spearman rank correlations were used to examine monotonic associations between parenting-response coding and outcome domains. Kruskal–Wallis tests were used for exploratory comparisons across the descriptive parenting-response groups. Interpretation was deliberately non-causal and the statistical results were treated as exploratory.

4. Results

Of the 83 submitted forms, 75 were retained. Authoritarian-pattern responses formed the largest group (n=33), followed by authoritative-pattern responses (n=31), permissive-pattern responses (n=6), and mixed/tied responses (n=5). The mean overall directional difficulty score was 1.67 in the authoritative-pattern group and 2.10 in the authoritarian-

pattern group. Several rank correlations were statistically significant. Authoritative-pattern coding was negatively associated with anger ($\rho=-0.32$, $p=.006$), emotional difficulty ($\rho=-0.48$, $p<.001$), social-adjustment difficulty ($\rho=-0.54$, $p<.001$), and overall difficulty ($\rho=-0.53$, $p<.001$). Authoritarian-pattern coding showed positive associations with anger ($\rho=.36$, $p=.002$), emotional difficulty ($\rho=.35$, $p=.002$), social-adjustment difficulty ($\rho=.45$, $p<.001$), and overall difficulty ($\rho=.48$, $p<.001$). Kruskal–Wallis testing showed a non-significant comparison for anger ($H=6.11$, $p=.106$), while group differences were observed for emotional difficulty ($H=10.19$, $p=.017$), social-adjustment difficulty ($H=20.32$, $p<.001$), and overall difficulty ($H=14.93$, $p=.002$). These tests identify differences in the available sample but do not establish causal effects or directionality.

Spearman rank correlations

Association	ρ	p
Authoritative – anger	–0.32	.006
Authoritarian – anger	.36	.002
Authoritative – emotional difficulty	–0.48	<.001
Authoritarian – emotional difficulty	.35	.002
Authoritative – social-adjustment difficulty	–0.54	<.001
Authoritarian – social-adjustment difficulty	.45	<.001
Authoritative – overall difficulty	–0.53	<.001
Authoritarian – overall difficulty	.48	<.001

Kruskal–Wallis comparisons

Outcome	H	p
Anger	6.11	.106
Emotional difficulty	10.19	.017
Social-adjustment difficulty	20.32	<.001
Overall difficulty	14.93	.002

5. Discussion

The overall pattern indicates that adolescents classified through the project's response-coding procedure as having more authoritative-pattern responses tended to have lower directional difficulty scores, whereas authoritarian-pattern responses tended to be associated with higher difficulty scores. The consistency across emotional, social-adjustment, and overall outcomes provides a coherent exploratory pattern within this dataset. These findings are compatible with the broader literature reviewed in the dissertation, where warmth, behavioural control, autonomy support, and parenting dimensions have been linked with adolescent adjustment. However, the current study should not be presented as demonstrating that one parenting style causes better or poorer adolescent behaviour. The cross-sectional design cannot determine temporal ordering, and the project-specific measurement approach means that the response categories are descriptive rather than equivalent to a formally validated parenting-style inventory. The very small permissive and mixed/tied groups further limit stable subgroup comparisons. The results are therefore most appropriately interpreted as preliminary evidence of associations that may guide future research using validated measures, larger samples, documented sampling procedures, and longitudinal or preregistered designs.

6. Limitations

The main limitations are the cross-sectional design, the online/project sample, the use of a project-specific questionnaire rather than a documented validated instrument, the small permissive and mixed/tied groups, and the inability to establish temporal or causal direction. The findings also depend on adolescents' self-report and the coding procedure described in the dissertation. Consequently, the results should not be treated as clinical diagnoses, causal estimates, or population-level prevalence figures.

7. Conclusion

Within the retained sample, perceived parenting-response patterns were associated with selected adolescent behavioural, emotional, and social-adjustment indicators. Authoritative-pattern coding was generally associated with lower directional difficulty, while authoritarian-pattern coding was generally associated with higher difficulty. The findings support further investigation but should remain within the limits of the cross-sectional exploratory design. Future studies should use validated instruments, stronger sampling procedures, larger and more balanced parenting-pattern groups, and longitudinal designs to examine directionality more rigorously.

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