

# The Impact of Parenting Styles on Adolescent's Moral Development

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**Abstract:** This review paper mainly focuses on the effect of parenting styles on adolescent moral development. By summarizing previous studies in a convergent view, this paper analyzes the social trend of globalization and flow of information and elaborates on different types of parenting and various aspects of moral development of adolescents. The paper concludes that authoritative parenting style is the most ideal one to nurture adolescents on the right track. Adolescents nowadays are facing more pressure, more incentives and risks to explore and survive in society. Therefore, parents should change their way of educating children in order to better lead them in the correct way morally. Different aspects are discussed in the study, namely, authoritative, authoritarian, permissive parenting styles, violent behaviors, globalization, and online virtues. These aspects together provide a wholesome guide for parents and adolescents to communicate and work towards a positive mode of growth.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Different ways parents nurture their young are called parenting styles. Researchers classified parenting styles into three stages, i.e., authoritarian, permissive, and authoritative (Smetana 2017). Relying on standards, authoritarian parents attempt to shape, control, and evaluate their children's behavior; permissive parents view warmth and autonomy granting more than controlling. Authoritative parenting style falls in the middle. While Maccoby and Martin in the 1980s defines four types of parenting styles using two dimensions--namely, responsiveness and demandingness. The former speculates the affection, interaction, sensitivity, and acceptance parents show to their child's behaviour and feelings; the latter refers to the extent to which parents' control and regulate their children's behavior. Adolescence is the period of life that typically spans from the onset of puberty to the attainment of social and economic independence. It generally includes the teenage years, from around age 10 to 19. Moral development is the formation of one's concept of conscience, right and wrong, social attitudes, ethical and religious values and behavior.

The stage of adolescence is initiated by puberty--a distinctive developmental period of physiological alterations (Saracho 2023). It also symbolizes learning development and maturation, adolescents

have to adapt themselves towards their self-identity, expose more to the society and navigate more towards complex social situations. This stage is important because adolescents are riskier and more vulnerable. Specifically, a marked increase in risk of death and disability caused by adolescence rebellion is exclusive in this age range. Therefore, it is crucial to keep adolescents on the right track and protect them in order to better prepare for adulthood. Moral development is important because morality ensures the peace and justice of society. It is believed that moral development is crucial in adolescent stages because teenagers are rebellious in the period, trying to go against the social norms and moral rules. Meanwhile, if they were misled into an antisocial pathway, then the generation may threaten society or pose immoral actions on others. Being morally misled for teenagers also kill the rest of their life to life normally, since they risk being sanctioned by law. Therefore, the moral development in adolescent greatly shapes the overall personality of the person. In addition, parenting styles are hypothesized to be indicators or motivators of moral development of adolescents. Therefore, studying this topic can help adjust parenting styles in order to provide a better influence on adolescent's moral development.

In the broad domain of psychology, it is observed that neuroscience and cognitivism constantly emerge as major trends. Seven major theories in

developmental psychology are: sociocultural theory, behavioral child development, cognitive development, attachment theory, social learning theory, psychosocial development, and psychosexual development. Main theories in developmental psychology are mainly focused on childhood development, while adolescent development is generally neglected or slightly depicted. Previous studies about how parenting styles influence moral development of adolescents lack an overview of various aspects of moral development or parenting styles. This study puts moral development of adolescents in a broader picture of globalization era, where information spurt. In this context, this review also incorporates various aspects of moral development, namely, online empathy and authenticity, violent video games, academic self-efficacy, and antisocial behaviors. In addition, this literature review discusses different parenting styles, genders, and influences. To sum up, this review discusses parenting styles and moral development in a more wholesome view.

## **2 THE LINK BETWEEN PARENTING STYLE AND MORAL AREAS**

### **2.1 The Overall Effect of Parenting**

It is hypothesized that parents have multiple roles in forming adolescent's morality in the globalization era. The information exchange in globalization era is so fast that internet access often makes adolescents, defined previously, trapped in negative behavior. Parents, as legal supervisors of their children, may serve multiple roles to guide the morality of adolescents. In this era of blasting information and access to internet, the roles parents play is crucial for modifying their children's growth (Tan & Yasin 2020). To investigate what specific role parents play and how their roles shape adolescent morals in globalization era, qualitative method is used. Data is obtained through interviews, observation, and documentation studies, research data is interactively analyzed. 206 Junior high-school students from the Barung-Barung Balantai village were asked about what they receive from their parents and how parents provide these roles. The results show that parents have multiple roles like educators, coaches, motivators and supervisors in shaping adolescent's moral development. Globalization has mainly impacts in negatively shaping adolescent growth because of the rapid flow of

uncontrolled/unfiltered information brings great harm to adolescents who experience growth and perplexed mind. Therefore, parents must spend time paying attention to the adolescents moral development. This means that parents do serve multiple roles in shaping adolescent morality: educators, coaches, motivators, and supervisors.

Authoritative parenting, discussed before as a mediated version between permissive and authoritarian parenting, can best improve children's moral development. A study is sampled from 350 children from 6-10 years out of 3904 population, and experiment is using a quantitative approach of a step wise regression technique with a survey and questionnaire method distributed through a google form, applying Baumrind's Theory and Tuana's theory in the statements asked (Masitah & Sitepu 2021). 48.1% boys and 51.9% girls are reported for their moral development. Both authoritarian and authoritative parenting have significant value of  $0.000 < 0.05$ , suggesting that they both influence the moral development of children. Meanwhile, authoritative model, with 16.1% in the equation of stepwise regression, is the most influential to moral development among all. Results indicate that authoritative parenting is most correlated with moral development of children. Authoritative parenting symbolizes emotional support and recognition of children's autonomy and clear and high expectations. Authoritative parents try to direct the child but in a rational way. To elaborate, being both demanding and responding, authoritative parenting mediates the interaction between parents and children--giving them enough love and support--while also regulating the adolescent's behavior in the correct track. Therefore, authoritative parenting do serve as the best model for parents to improve children's moral development in adolescence. This part of the essay gives an overview of parenting, introduces the background and trend of the society, and in that context the relationship between parenting styles and adolescent morality. Besides, this portion of the essay also confirms the most suitable parenting style in benefiting adolescent morality, which paves the way for further break down of the concept "moral development"; especially, how and why authoritative parenting improves moral development in different aspects is incorporated in further argumentation.

### **2.2 The Impact on Different Aspects of Moral Development**

The feeling of pride, shame and guilt--factors that help regulate appropriate social behavior--is

hypothesized to associate most positively with authoritative parenting. Moral emotions are emotions from a position-taking standpoint, enabling one to understand how others feel. (psychologytoday.com). In one's moral development, pride, shame and guilt are vital emotions to help control the legal discipline of an individual. The study collected data via closed-response self-administered questionnaire containing sociodemographic questions. 462 participants are involved in the research, with 219 adolescents in the study group completing socio-educational measures, and 243 non-offending adolescents in the Comparison group (Azhar et al. 2020). Shame and Guilt Scales (in which shame refers to the sense of embarrassment felt when facing moral judgments, and guilt refers to error and regret realization, and Two-Dimensional (Authenticity and Arrogance) Scale of Pride are used for measurements. Results revealed that all three groups of moral emotions are positively correlated to the factor of high demandingness in parenting styles, with little correlation to responsiveness. It can be concluded that parenting styles with relatively higher demandingness can help regulate the moral behavior of adolescents, thus reducing transgressive acts against the law.

Authoritative parenting is believed to boost online empathy and authenticity through expelling moral disengagement and positively correlating with moral identity. Moral disengagement is the reason why people engage in dishonest or unkind behaviors when online through reconstructing the truth. Moral identity is the extent traits like empathy and authenticity are vital to one's self-concept. In a previous study, 788 UK adolescents aged 11–18 years (66% male) completed measures of these key constructs mentioned above (Morgan & Fowers 2022). Their social media use and demographic information were assessed prior to the surveys. This research uses several self-measure scales for the participants to self-rate themselves. To clarify, gender and age are all considered potential factors that contribute to the results. The final results are as follows: adolescent's moral disengagement is associated with online empathy and authenticity; adolescent moral identity will positively correlate with those behavior online; moral identity of adolescents will be partially linked to online empathy and authenticity indirectly by reducing the influence of moral disengagement; authoritative parenting will not be associated with online virtues mentioned above through moral disengagement and identity. Granted, the measures are self-report and social-desirably

constructs, so the results may be in some degree biased and restricted.

Authoritative parenting is believed to positively correlate with adolescents' learning experience. Moral intelligence is the ability for goals and actions to apply ethical principles, motivating students to properly learn and reduce dishonesty in academics. According to a study, 296 7th to 11th graders were surveyed online (Alhadabi et al. 2019). The survey contains demographic scales with variables: moral intelligence, three maternal paternal parenting styles, moral intelligence, academic self-efficacy in three models. Specifically, the three paternal styles directly associate with moral intelligence and indirect associations with learning motivation. Authoritative and authoritarian parenting styles correlated directly with learning motivation but didn't correlate with moral intelligence. Moral intelligence had directly and positively correlated with students' academic efficacy in self and motivation for learning, mediating the negative associations between three paternal parenting styles and motivation of students. Academic self-efficacy positively associates with students' motivation. External and internal factors like parenting styles and moral intelligence and students' motivation among adolescents in schools are useful insights provided by the study's findings. To summarize, authoritative parenting is shown to positively moderate adolescent's self-efficacy and motivation for learning by affecting the mediator-moral intelligence. As age grows, the natural interest for learning gradually declines, so parents are crucial to boost their children's academic interest in the correct way. This part of the essay incorporates the impact of authoritative parenting pose on appropriate social behavior, online virtues, and learning experiences for adolescents. Most data show that authoritative parenting styles do positively affect all of these aspects of moral development in adolescents. Therefore, parents should alter their way of educating children towards an authoritative style.

### 3 RELEVANT FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO THE ASSOCIATION

It was hypothesized that paternal influence may be bigger for volition to function because of his authority and prestige. Volitional, according to Merriam Webster Dictionary, means the act of determining or choosing something. It was believed that fathers serve as the authority of one's family and would be more

likely to be a role model in encouraging adolescents' volition to function. According to a study, 789 Italian adolescents took the Moral Values Internalization Questionnaire and the Autonomy-Support Scale for measurement (Barni et al. 2022). The subscale of PVF is used to measure the degree parents enhance volitional functions. In fact, results indicate that maternal promotion significantly and positively associate with motivations for internalizing moral values, regardless of adolescents' sex and age. This implies that maternal influence nowadays has gradually grown and the maternal bonding and connection with adolescents may be stronger. On the other hand, paternal volition may be too strict to be internalized or followed.

Violent video games are thought to be correlated with aggressive adolescent behaviour, but not the only factor. It is believed that parental rearing patterns are also associated with teenage aggression. In a previous study focusing on Chinese adolescents, data is obtained by the video game questionnaire (subject's favourite games, the frequency of playing games, and extent of violence), buss-perry aggression questionnaire (physical and verbal aggression, anger, and hostility), moral disengagement scale (eight mechanisms: distorting consequences, moral justification, dehumanization, diffusion of responsibility, euphemistic language, comparison of advantage, responsibility displacement, and blame attribution), and EMBU measuring parental rearing patterns (Li et al. 2020). The sources are 630 Chinese adolescents with a valid response rate of 85.48% consisting of 12 to 20 years old. Results indicated that violent video games were positively associated with moral disengagement and adolescent aggression. The findings suggest that the factors that add to the risk of severe adolescent aggression may be moral disengagement, anger, hostility and parental rearing patterns. Specifically, parental rearing patterns serve as a moderator on moral disengagement and aggression. Paternal preference creates a spoiled environment, leading children to be unaware of the bottom line. Mother's denial disproves the adolescent's growing self-consciousness. Therefore, parents should provide a moderating family with both love and support while clearly stating the bottom lines that should never be touched upon. Adolescents are longing for independence and freedom, so their exploration process of the outer world would be abrupt or cranky. Parents need to encourage them to discover and observe society while leading them to the correct pathway.

It is hypothesized that harsh parenting may lead to child aggression. Harsh parenting, negative parental

behaviors that incorporate rejection, overcontrol, and verbal and physical aggression. According to a study, 397 12 to 16 years old adolescents and their parents from China were the participants (Qi 2019). Statistics come from the self-reports for parents on their parental negative attribution and parenting harsh, moral disengagement on adolescents, and peer nomination of aggressiveness. Therefore, harsh parenting correlates with moral disengagement and adolescent aggression. As a moderator, negative parental attribution alters the association of harsh parenting to moral disengagement and adolescent aggression. In detail, harsh parenting is only significantly associated with moral disengagement for adolescents. Moral disengagement with a higher level can more likely evoke aggression along with high levels of negative parental attribution. Therefore, it is vital for parents to reduce their harshness on children. This part of the essay elaborates on different types of parenting styles, like harsh parenting, maternal and paternal differences, and parental volition.

## 4 CONCLUSION

In this review paper, authoritative parenting are sought to be the most ideal form of parenting styles, leading children in their puberty to an optimistic, self-motivating and ethical lifestyle. It is high demandingness and responsiveness both contribute to the adolescent's moral development. In detail, in the era of globalization where information accumulates uncontrollably, where people compete fiercely and cruel in reality, authoritative parenting styles regulate adolescent's wrong behaviors and guide them to explore their own interests by enhancing the children's moral identity, moral intelligence, further boosting their online authenticity and empathy, and self-efficacy. Moreover, due to the rebellion instinct of the stage puberty, and the growth of self-esteem for juveniles, authoritative parenting greatly solves cases of being aggressive, self-doubting and behaving illegally.

Many studies in this review focus on specific regions (e.g., China, Italy, UK), which may limit the generalizability of findings. Parenting styles and moral development are influenced by cultural norms, socioeconomic status, and societal expectations (Bornstein, 2012). For example, authoritarian parenting may be more accepted in collectivist cultures, whereas permissive parenting might be more prevalent in individualistic societies. Future research should include cross-cultural comparisons to



determine whether authoritative parenting remains universally optimal or if cultural adaptations are necessary. Besides, the reviewed studies primarily use cross-sectional designs, which capture only a snapshot of adolescent moral development. Moral growth is a dynamic process influenced by ongoing parent-child interactions, peer relationships, and societal changes. Longitudinal studies tracking adolescents from early puberty to young adulthood would provide deeper insight into how parenting styles shape moral trajectories over time.

While this review briefly addresses online empathy and violent video games, the digital landscape is rapidly evolving. Future research should explore how parenting styles influence adolescents' moral decision-making in emerging platforms like AI-driven social networks, virtual reality, and deepfake media. Additionally, studies could examine whether digital monitoring (e.g., parental control apps) enhances or hinders moral autonomy. Most studies focus on traditional two-parent households, neglecting single-parent, same-sex, or multigenerational families. Research should investigate how parenting styles function in diverse family systems and whether alternative caregiving models (e.g., co-parenting, grandparent-led households) yield comparable moral outcomes. By addressing these gaps, future studies can offer a more comprehensive understanding of how parenting styles interact with cultural, temporal, and technological factors to shape adolescent moral development.

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