

## Parenting Styles and Behavioral Problems among Early Adolescents at Qena Governorate

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### Abstract

**Introduction:** Parenting plays an important role in the transition from adolescence to adulthood and socialization. Parenting behavior can restrict or reinforce optimal individuation amongst adolescents. **Aim of the study:** to assess the relationship between parenting style and behavioral problems in adolescents. **Subjects and method:** Correlational descriptive research design was used for this study. This study was conducted at four preparatory schools; 2 schools for urban areas and 2 for rural ones which were chosen randomly. A total sample is 363 adolescents. Two tools were used for this study: tool I youth self-report (YSR) to assess behavioral problems in adolescents and Parent Authority Questionnaire (PAQ) to assess Parenting styles (authoritative, permissive, and authoritarian). **Results:** there was a significant relation between authoritarian parenting style and both of internalizing and externalizing behavioral problems enlisted in youth self-report. The most significant factor affecting abnormal behavioral problems among adolescents is authoritarian parenting style. **Conclusion:** Authoritarian parenting style with low responsiveness and high demanding in parenting behavior has shown to be directly related to increased children's internalizing and externalizing symptoms. **Recommendations:** Training programs for parents about the best style they should use with their children.

**Keywords:** Parenting style, Internalizing, Externalizing Behavioral Problems & Adolescents

### Introduction

Parenting plays an important role in the transition from adolescence to adulthood and socialization.

According to Utti (2006), Okapko (2004), & Ofoegbu (2002) parenting is the act of parenthood in upbringing, training, rearing, or educating of the child. Parenting styles are the representation of how parents respond to and demand of their children. Parenting practices are specific behaviors, while parenting styles represent broader patterns of parenting practices (Okorodudu, 2010).

Decades of research have suggested that parenting behaviors and practices associated with parenting styles are related to child outcomes of classroom competence and externalizing behavioral problems (Jewell, et al., 2008, Raikes, et al., 2006).

Parenting behavior can restrict or reinforce optimal individuation amongst adolescents. Parents who ignore sufficient freedom for their children (to follow friendships or make decision) might restrain the improvement of suitable levels of individuality and autonomy (Aquilino & Supple, 2001). Good parenting practices can positively impact their children's development. (Caporella, 2007, Jewell, et al., 2008, Raikes, et al., 2006).

Understanding the different types of parenting style and their effects on the parent-teen relationship may help them to overcome the problems of this phase (Kopko, 2007). Teenage years are characterized by stressful events for both adolescents and parents. In

this period, teenagers endure a number of developmental changes comprising emotional, biological, cognitive, and social ones, so adolescents are liable to many problems especially in behaviors. Several studies have been conducted to examine the role of parenting styles in children's and adolescent's internalizing and externalizing behavioral problems (Caporella, 2007, Jewell, et al., 2008, Raikes, et al., 2006).

Parenting styles according to Baumrind's study (1991) are classified to three parenting styles: authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive. These three parenting styles based on the levels of demandingness (control) and responsiveness (warmth) displayed by parents on a regular basis and in a variety of situations and are often used in studies investigating parenting styles in relation to diverse children outcome variables, such as academic achievement, self-confidence, aggression, delinquent behavior, and substance abuse. Authoritative style has a high responsiveness and high demanding, authoritarian style has low responsiveness and high demanding, and finally, Permissive style, which is labeled by high responsiveness and low demanding. (Alizadeh et al., 2011, Raikes et al., 2006)

The findings of a number of studies revealed an association between the quality of parenting styles and children's behavioral problems. (Aunola & Kurmi, 2005, Mulvaney & Mebert, 2007).

Nurses in many settings have direct access to adolescents and thus have the potential for performing many helpful interventions to prevent or address problem behaviors. (Bartlett, et al., 2007). The nurses can prevent or limit behavioral problems of students by giving education to the school community in problem-solving and conflict resolution skills, recognizing early warning signs that lead to violence and factors outside of the school setting that might predispose adolescents to violent behavior or threaten students' safety. (Greene, 2008). Although numerous studies have examined the connection between abnormal behavior and parenting styles in children and adolescents, there is no research about the relationship between parenting styles and abnormal behavior in Egypt, so more studies are needed to understand the relationship between parenting practices and adolescent's misbehavior. The focus of the present study is the relationship between the above-mentioned variables.

### The significance of the study

The family and parents are a socio-cultural-economic arrangement that exerts significant influence on adolescent's behavior and the development of their characters. Any ignorance on the part of parents may lead to unwanted damaging effects on adolescent's growth and thereafter may create behavioral problems in adolescent (Baumrind, 1978; Baumrind,1991). So, it is important to focus on the relationship between the different parenting styles and behavioral problems in adolescents.

### Aim of the study

The aim of this study was to assess the relationship between different parenting styles and behavioral problems among adolescents at Qena Governorate.

### Research Question

What is the relationship between parenting styles and behavioral problems among adolescents at Qena Governorate?

### Subjects and Method

#### Research design

The correlational descriptive research design was utilized in this study.

#### Setting:

This study was conducted in four public preparatory schools in Qena Governorate (Dandara Preparatory school and Awlad Amr Preparatory school) as rural areas and (Omr Ebn El-khtab Preparatory School and El-Manna Preparatory School) as urban ones. Those schools were chosen randomly.

### Subjects

The study subjects consisted of 400 students in third year of Preparatory school in Qena about 37 students were dropped out, 30 of them didn't return the sheet back and seven were absent. So, a total sample recruited was 363 students, boys and girls were included; they aged between 15 to 18 years. The schools were chosen randomly by a simple random sample. A list of all preparatory schools in Qena sector was written on a slip of paper, put them into a bowl and 4 of them was drawn. Then from each school, two classes were randomly selected as demonstrated in Table (1).

**Table (1): Sample size from each school**

School	Residence	Female	Male	Total
Dandara Preparatory school	Rural	52	41	183
Awlad Amr Preparatory school		50	40	
Omr Ebn El-khtab Preparatory school	Urban	50	40	180
El-mana Preparatory school		50	40	
Total		202	161	363

### Tools of the study

Two tools were used in this study to collect the necessary data:

#### Tool I: Youth Self Report (YSR):

This scale was developed by (Achenbach and Rescorla, 2001) and translated by (Mohammed, 2001 and Abdel Khalek, 2006) for children from (4-18) years and consists of 112 questions (problem scale), Arabic version was used. It has three main parts

**Part I: - Demographic Characteristics which includes** (Adolescent name, age, sex, parent's education and occupation, date of birth, and residence)

#### Part II: -Total Competence Scale:-

This was computed as a sum of activities level (8items), social relationship (6 items) and school performance (4 items). The scoring system of the scale was based on T-score. If T-score more than 40, it was considered in the normal range, while 37-40 represented borderline score and T-score less than 37 represented the abnormal level.

#### Part III: - The Problem Scales

This scale compromised into three broad constructs they are internalizing behavioral problems, externalizing behavioral problems scales, and a total

problem score. The internalizing behavioral problems consist of the scores of 3 subscales that include withdrawn (9 items), somatic complaints (9 items) and anxiety and depression (18 items). The externalizing behavioral problems consist of the sum of the scores of 2 subscales that include delinquent (9 items) and aggressive behavior (25 items). The social problems (13 items), thought problems(8 items), and attention problems (20 items)are included in the non-internalizing non externalizing grouping, the total problem scale includes all 8 core syndromes.

The participants responded to (3) point likert scale (never = zero, sometime = 1 and always =2). For total problems, externalizing behavioral problems and internalizing behavioral problems. if T Scores less than 60 it was considered as normal, while 60-63 represented borderline scores, and scores greater than 63 was abnormal. Hand – scored and computer – scored profiles are available.

#### **Tool II: Parent Authority Questionnaire (PAQ)**

Parent Authority Questionnaire (PAQ) was developed by **Buri (1991)**. It was designed to measure **Baumrind's (1967)** three dimensions:(authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive.)

PAQ consists of 30-items that have three subscales based on the parental authority prototypes and each of the three parenting styles consist of 10 items. There are:

- Permissive (P: items 1,6,10,13,14,17,19,21,24 and 28).
- Authoritarian (A: items 2, 3, 7, 9, 12, 16,18,25,26 and 29).
- Authoritative (T: items 4, 5, 8,11,15,20,22,23,27 and 30).

The scores on each range are from 10 to 150, ranging from {strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5)}, it is calculated easily by adding the individual items within each subscale. Higher scores signify a greater level of the specific parenting style (**Ang & Goh, 2006**).

#### **Method**

An official permission was obtained from the vice Minister of Education in Qena Governorate to collect the necessary data.

The study was approved by Ethical Committee of the Faculty of Nursing, Assiut University. Students who participated in the study filled in the questionnaire after explaining the sheet and purpose of the study and after assuring that no harm will result to them and data obtained are confidential. Then, oral consent was obtained from children and their parents. The sheet took about (25-35) minutes. The data were collected daily except Fridays in activity lessons and in break between lessons (break lasts between 30 -45 mintues).

Internal consistency for tools I& II was calculated using Cronbach alpha with a reliability score of 0.78 and 0.85 for a tool I &II, respectively. Content validity for scales was assessed by a jury of five experts in Pediatric Nursing and Psychometricians with content validity index were 0.67and 0.75 for tool I& II, respectively.

A pilot study was carried out on 10% of the total children to test the content, clarity of the tools and to estimate the length of time needed to collect the data. As a result of the pilot study, no modifications were done. The researcher started to collect the data from the first of October to the end of December 2015; the data were collected from students in previously mentioned settings.

#### **Statistical Analysis**

The collected data were reviewed, prepared for computer entry, coded categorized, analyzed and tabulated. Descriptive statistics (i.e., frequencies, percentages, etc) were calculated using computer program SPSS version 21. Chi-square and multiple binary logistic regressions were used to compare differences in the distribution of frequencies among different groups. It is considered significant when P. value was less than ( $p < 0.05$ ).

## Results

Table (1): Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Studied Sample.

	No.	%
<b>Total</b>	<b>363</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Sex</b>		
• Male	161	44.4
• Female	202	55.6
<b>Age/ years</b>		
• 14	99	27.2
• 15	239	65.8
• 16-18	25	7.0
<b>Residence:</b>		
• Rural	200	55.1
• Urban	163	44.9
<b>Mother's education</b>		
• Illiterate/read and write	126	34.8
• Basic education	56	15.4
• Secondary	133	36.6
• University	48	13.2
<b>Father's education</b>		
• Illiterate/read and write	74	20.4
• Basic education	60	16.5
• Secondary	148	40.8
• University	81	22.3

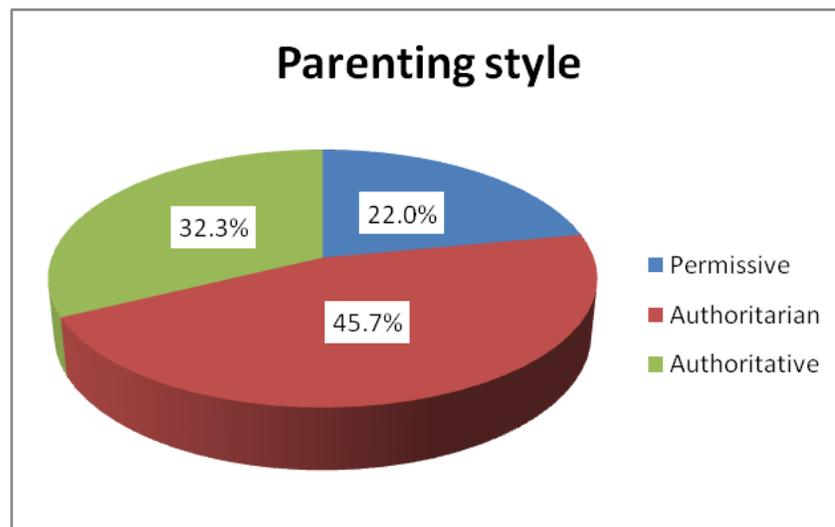


Figure I: Percentage Distributions of Parenting Styles among Studied Sample

Table (2): Percentage Distributions of Behavioral Problems among Studied Sample.

Child behaviors	Normal		Borderline		Abnormal	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Total Competence scale</b>	246	67.8	22	6.1	95	26.2
• Activities level	238	65.6	26	7.2	99	27.3
• Social relationship	252	69.4	19	5.2	92	25.3
• School performance	235	64.7	26	7.2	102	28.1
<b>Internalizing problems</b>	217	59.8	30	8.3	116	32.0
• Withdrawn	270	74.4	25	6.9	68	18.7
• Somatic complaints	269	74.1	20	5.5	74	20.4
• Anxiety/Depression	269	74.1	18	5.0	76	20.9
<b>Externalizing problems</b>	238	65.6	25	6.9	100	27.5
• Delinquent Behavior	260	71.6	25	6.9	78	21.5
• Aggressive Behavior	265	73.0	25	6.9	73	20.1
<b>Non Internalizing problems non Externalizing problems</b>						
• Social problems	273	75.2	20	5.5	70	19.3
• Thought problems	268	73.8	18	5.0	77	21.2
• Attention problems	271	74.7	21	5.8	71	19.6
<b>Total problems scale</b>	278	76.6	0	0.0	85	23.4

Table (3): Relationship between Parenting Style and Demographic Characteristics of Early Adolescents:

	Parenting style						P. value
	Permissive		Authoritarian		Authoritative		
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
<b>Total</b>	80	22.0	166	45.7	117	32.3	
<b>Sex</b>							
Male	47	58.8	65	39.2	49	41.9	0.012*
Female	33	41.3	101	60.8	68	58.1	
<b>Residence</b>							
Rural	43	53.8	98	59.0	59	50.4	0.345
Urban	37	46.3	68	41.0	58	49.6	
<b>Mother's education</b>							
Illiterate/read and write	15	18.8	62	37.3	49	41.9	<0.001**
Basic education	13	16.3	26	15.7	17	14.5	
Secondary	24	30.0	65	39.2	44	37.6	
University	28	35.0	13	7.8	7	6.0	
<b>Father's education</b>							
Illiterate/read and write	8	10.0	43	25.9	23	19.7	0.002**
Basic education	9	11.3	28	16.9	23	19.7	
Secondary	32	40.0	66	39.8	50	42.7	
University	31	38.8	29	17.5	21	17.9	

\* Statistically significant difference ( $p < 0.05$ )\*\* Statistically significant difference ( $p < 0.001$ )

Table (4): Relationship between Parenting Style and Behavioral Problems:

Items	Parenting style						P. value
	Permissive		Authoritarian		Authoritative		
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
<b>Total</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>22.0</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>45.7</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>32.3</b>	
<b>Competence level</b>							
Abnormal	5	6.3	78	47.0	12	10.3	<0.001**
Borderline	4	5.0	8	4.8	10	8.5	
Normal	71	88.8	80	48.2	95	81.2	
<b>Internalizing level</b>							
Abnormal	11	13.8	82	49.4	23	19.7	<0.001**
Borderline	5	6.3	14	8.4	11	9.4	
Normal	64	80.0	70	42.2	83	70.9	
<b>Externalizing level</b>							
Abnormal	5	6.3	82	49.4	13	11.1	0.001**
Borderline	4	5.0	8	4.8	13	11.1	
Normal	71	88.8	76	45.8	91	77.8	
<b>Total Behavior level</b>							
Abnormal	2	2.5	72	43.4	11	9.4	<0.001**
Borderline	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	
Normal	78	97.5	94	56.6	106	90.6	

\*\* Statistically significant difference ( $p < 0.01$ )

Table (5): Significant Factors of Behavioral Problems among Studied Adolescents:

Behavioral Problems	Parenting style							
	Permissive			Authoritarian				Authoritative
	Odds	95%CI of Odds	P. value	Odds	95%CI of Odds	P. value		
<b>Total Competence scale</b>	0.79	0.24 -2.67	0.709	14.77	6.38 -34.17	0.000**	1 (Reference )	
• Activities level	0.76	0.23 -2.57	0.661	15.79	6.76 -36.87	0.000**	1 (Reference )	
• Social relationship	0.89	0.26- 3.03	0.857	16.40	6.95 -38.7	0.000**	1 (Reference )	
• School performance	0.86	0.27 -2.72	0.796	14.61	6.34 -33.65	0.000**	1 (Reference )	
<b>Internalizing problems</b>	0.75	0.32 -1.78	0.517	5.30	2.84 -9.9	0.000**	1 (Reference )	
• Withdrawn	0.00	0 -0	0.997	29.05	9.7- 86.98	0.000**	1 (Reference )	
• Somatic complaints	0.26	0.03 -2.3	0.228	16.98	6.75 - 42.73	0.000**	1 (Reference )	
• Anxiety/Depression	0.27	0.03 - 2.33	0.234	17.59	7.01 - 44.13	0.000**	1 (Reference )	
<b>Externalizing level</b>	0.69	0.21-2.31	0.550	14.68	6.4 - 33.71	0.000**	1 (Reference )	
• Delinquent Behavior	0.21	0.02 -1.81	0.155	20.47	7.89 - 53.11	0.000**	1 (Reference )	
• Aggressive Behavior	0.30	0.03 - 2.66	0.279	23.63	8.75 - 63.8	0.000**	1 (Reference )	
• Social problems	0.45	0.05 - 4.24	0.489	30.35	10.23 - 90.05	0.000**	1 (Reference )	
• Thought problems	0.26	0.03 - 2.28	0.226	18.83	7.44 - 47.71	0.000**	1 (Reference )	
• Attention problems	0.39	0.04 - 3.52	0.400	25.94	9.24 - 72.82	0.000**	1 (Reference )	
<b>Total problems scale</b>	0.39	0.08-1.96	0.254	12.48	5.49 - 28.38	0.000**	1 (Reference )	

\*\* Statistically significant difference ( $p < 0.01$ )

**Table 1:** shows socio-demographic characteristics of adolescents. More than half of studied adolescents were females (55.6%). About two-thirds of them aged 15 years old (65.8%). Regarding residence, more than

half of them lived in rural areas (55.1%). Secondary education represented the highest percentage of parents of studied sample (36.6% and 40.8%) for both mother's and father's education respectively.

**Figure (1)** demonstrates that authoritarian style represents the most frequent style used by parents of studied sample followed by authoritative and permissive (45.7%, 32.3%, and 22.0%, respectively).

**Table (2):** Illustrates percentage distributions of behavioral problems among early adolescents. It was found that abnormal behavior of internalizing problems is more frequent among studied sample followed by externalized problems, then competence and finally total problems (32.0%, 27.5%, 26.2% and 23.4%) for internalizing, externalizing, competence and total problems scale, respectively.

**Table (3):** presents relation between parenting style and demographic characteristics of early adolescents. There is a significant relation between parenting style and sex of adolescent with authoritarian style being more frequently used with female children. P-value (0.012). Moreover, mother and father education were significantly related to parenting style with higher authoritarian style used by parents with secondary education (39.2% and 39.8% for both mother's and father's education, respectively), where P- value was < 0.001 and 0.002, respectively.

**Table (4):** shows that a significant relationship exists between parenting styles and behavioral problems among studied sample with higher frequency of abnormal behaviors among adolescents of authoritarian parents. (47%, 49.4%, 49.4% and 43.4%) for competence, internalizing, externalizing and total problems scale, respectively. P-value <0.001 for all behavioral problems sub scales.

**Table (5):** explains the significant factors of behavioral problems among studied sample multiple using binary logistic regressions. It is shown from the table that authoritarian parenting style is a significant factor to all abnormal behavioral problems subscales among studied sample (Odds ratio: 14.77, 5.30, 14.68 and 12.48 ) for competence, internalizing, externalizing and total problems scale respectively. P- value <0.001 for all behavioral problems sub scales.

## Discussion

Parental authority plays an important role in the socialization process of juveniles, for instance, it influences the improvement of autonomy and prosocial values. According to **Baumrind (1971)**, children raised by authoritarian parents are dissatisfied and distrustful. Also, children of permissive parents suffer from lack of self-confidence and inquisitiveness. In his opinion, the ideal parenting style is authoritative style which upbringing curious and self-controlled children (**Ferrari & Olivette, 1994**).

Near half of parents of the studied adolescents (45.7%) in the present study used authoritarian style in dealing with their children. This is in accordance with (**Alsheikh, et al., 2010**) who reported that the idea that an authoritarian parenting style is desirable may stem from the parents' belief that this will lead to positive consequences for children's social and academic lives, and lead to their children learning to value discipline, norms and social hierarchy and furthermore, they also suggested that a proportion of parents in Eastern and Islamic societies believe that parents should be firm and restrictive.

The present study found a significant relation between parenting style and sex of child with higher frequency of authoritarian style among female students and permissive among male students as shown in table (3). This can be explained in the light of the Egyptian culture particularly upper Egypt who think that dealing with female children must be harsh in contrast to male who allowed them with some freedom.

It is worthy noted that parents' education is significantly related with parenting style in the current study with authoritarian parents have secondary education. This finding can be interpreted by the highest number of secondary education among parents of studied sample as shown in table (1).

This study found a significant relation between parenting styles and behavioral problems among studied sample with a higher percentage of abnormal behavior among adolescents with authoritarian parents regarding all behavioral subscales (P- value < 0.001 for all subscales) as shown in table (4).

This is in accordance with **Wolfradt et al., (2003)** who revealed a positive correlation between authoritarian parenting style and problems such as anxiety and depersonalization. In a study conducted by **Urooj & Atiya (2012)**, 100 teenagers between 13 and 17 years old. The result from Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient represented that there was a significant relationship between parenting styles of permissive/authoritarian and psychological problems among teens.

The findings of a number of studies revealed a positive association between the quality of parenting styles and children's behavioral problems (**Pearson, 2013, Sharma et al., 2011, Akhtar, et al., (2013)** who found a significant association between authoritarian parent and children with depression disorder). However, **Mahdavi et al., 2013** reported that permissive parenting style is positively associated with violence and disruptive, anti-social, outburst behavior, and hyperactivity tendency.

Regarding significant factors of behavioral problems among studied adolescents, the authoritarian style had the most significant factor affecting abnormal

behavior regarding competence level, internalizing problems, externalizing problems and total problems scale. P-value <0.001 for all behavioral problems sub scales. This is in agreement with **Nikoogoftar & Seghatoleslam, 2015** who stated that mothers' authoritarian style is associated with anxiety, depression, and behavioral and emotional problems amongst adolescents. These outcomes contradict with the results of **Ijaz and Mahmood (2009)** which found no association between maternal authoritarianism and depression and anxiety. These findings can be explained by the characteristics of authoritarian parents who are highly demanding with low responsiveness which produce a conflict with the adolescents who are obstinate and difficult to be controlled. These parents use harshness, punishment, and force to display their authority that may lead to behavioral problems among their children.

### Conclusion

This study concluded that there was a significant relation between authoritarian parenting style and each one of the problems enlisted in youth self-report. The most significant factor affecting abnormal behavioral problems among adolescents is authoritarian parenting style as indicated by binary logistic regression analysis.

### Recommendations

#### It is recommended from this study

- Guidance program will be needed to parents to avoid discrepancy in treating their children by their gender and to replace authoritarian style by authoritative one in their dealing with their children.
- Replication of this research study is needed to investigate the relationship between parenting style and behavioral problems using a large sample size and younger age groups.

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