

**Goal Orientation among Boys and Girls in Higher Secondary Schools of
Kerala: How Parenting Styles Influence It?**

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Abstract

The purpose of the study is to investigate the relation between parenting style and goal orientation among boys and girls in higher secondary schools of Kerala. Four types of parenting style and five categories of goal orientation. The sample comprised of 467 girls and 365 boys from higher secondary school in Kerala who were selected through stratified random sampling. Chi-square test of independence revealed that negligent parenting develops undefined goals and performance avoidance goals; authoritarian parenting produces more performance orientation and authoritative parenting produces more approach orientations. Also, association between parenting style and goal orientation is significant in case of adolescent boys, but not in case of girls. Findings imply that parents can influence students' goal orientation by promoting their children to set goals other than performance avoidance by changing their styles of parenting. Especially mothers' responsiveness and control have more crucial relation with goal orientation of students, and hence mothers can do more for their boys and girls in this respect.

Introduction

Parenting is the duty of parents, through which parents help the young for a full-fledged development. Developmental psychologists are interested in how parents influence the development of children's social and instrumental competence since at least 1920s. One of the most robust approaches to this area is the study of what has been called "parenting style".

Parenting style

There are two major dimensions underlying parental behavior (Maccoby & Martin, 1983); they are parental responsiveness and parental demandingness. Parental responsiveness refers to “the extent to which parents intentionally foster individuality, self-regulation and self-assertion by being attuned, supportive and acquiescent to children special needs and demands” (Baumrind, 1971). Parental demandingness refers to “the claims parents make on children to become integrated to the family whole, by their maturity demands, supervision, disciplinary efforts and willingness to confront the child who disobeys”. Categorizing parents according to whether they are high or low on parental demandingness and responsiveness creates a typology of four parenting styles: indulgent, authoritarian, authoritative and uninvolved (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Parenting style has been found to predict child well-being in the domains of social competence, academic performance, psychosocial development and problem behavior.

Goal orientation

Ames and Archer (1988) integrated the theories of Dweck (Dweck, 1986), Nicholls (Nicholls, 1984) and other theorists; they identified two types of achievement goals, which they called mastery and performance goals. Goal theorists separated each orientation into two dimensions: approach and avoidance (Elliot & Church, 1997; Pintrich, 2000). Pintrich (2000) identified four orientations; they are performance approach orientation, performance avoidance orientation, mastery approach orientation and mastery avoidance orientation. Research on achievement goal orientation shows that, mastery goal adoption leads to a variety of positive outcomes whereas performance goal adoption leads to a variety of negative outcomes (Dupeyrat & Marine, 2005; Howell & Watson, 2007; Wang & Erdheim, 2007; Sins, Joolingen, Savelsbergh & Hout-Wolters, 2008; Tuominen-Soini, Salmela-Aro & Niemivirta, 2008; Kadivar, Kavousian, Arabzadeh & Nikdel, 2011; Polychroni, Hatziechristou & Sideridis, 2012).

The present study intends to find out the relation between parenting style and goal orientation of higher secondary school students of Kerala.

Methodology

Participants

The sample comprised of 467 girls and 365 boys from higher secondary school in Kerala. The sampling technique used was stratified random sampling method, given due representation to strata like locale, type of management, gender of student and subject taken by student.

Instruments

Scale of Parenting style

Scale of parenting style, developed by Gafoor and Abidha (2012), was administered to assess the perceived parenting style of higher secondary school students. The items in the scale were prepared on the basis of characteristics that described by Baumrind for parental responsiveness and parental control. Scale of parenting style is a five point Likert type instrument. There are 19 items to measure responsiveness and 19 items to measure parental control. Scores for each parent were taken separately and sum of scores of each parent were taken for overall score. The test-retest coefficient of reliability of responsiveness variable in the scale is 0.81 and for control it is 0.83.

Goal Orientation Inventory

Goal Orientation inventory, developed by Gafoor and Abidha (2012), was used to find out the goal orientation of higher secondary school students. The inventory has been developed on the basis of achievement goal theories of Dweck (1986); Ames (1992); Pintrich (2000). Characteristics of performance goal orientation and mastery goal orientation were worked as the basis for the construction of items in the tool. The inventory consists of four categories of response. The subject needed to select a response category which he thought that it is most appropriately describes his or her goal. If the student has no specific goal orientation it is categorized as undefined goal orientation.

Procedure

After developing a rapport with the students the instruments were administered to the students. Proper instructions were given before administering the tool. All the doubts about the items were cleared on time.

Data analysis

Relation between parenting style and goal orientation of higher secondary school students were examined using chi-square test of independence.

Results

The results show that there exist a significant association between parenting style and goal orientation of adolescents in higher secondary schools [χ^2 (12, N = 832) =30.47, $p < .01$]. Negligent parenting results more undefined goals (50% undefined goals were from the students who gets negligent parenting). Negligent parenting results in more performance avoidance goal orientation (54.3% of performance avoidance orientation were from the student who gets a negligent parenting). Authoritarian parenting tends to associate with less undefined goals (2.9%), and tends to produce more performance orientation (47.1% performance approach orientation and 38.2% performance avoidance orientation), but very less mastery approach orientation and mastery avoidance orientation (5.9% each). Authoritative parenting tends to associate with more approach orientation, whether it is performance or mastery, than avoidance. Also the results revealed that association between parenting style and goal orientation of adolescent boys in higher secondary schools [χ^2 (12, N = 365) =21.85, $p < .05$] is significant, but of girls is not significant [χ^2 (12, N = 467) =15.65, $p > .05$]. It is found that as mothers' responsiveness is high, girls have less performance avoidance goal, mothers' control reduce performance avoidance orientation in adolescents.

Discussion

Parenting, one of the most influential interactions in case of students proved its crucial role in development of a student. Most of the research in achievement motivation suggested that mastery orientation is the most adaptive goal orientation for learning. Since there is a relation between

parenting style and goal orientation of adolescents, parents have to be aware and be supported to influence the students' goal orientation to set it in fashion the most appropriate to facilitate learning and development.

The previous researches show that performance avoidance orientation has negative effects on achievement as well as well-being. Performance-avoidance-goal orientation is the least desirable goal orientation. Therefore, it would not be better to have a performance-avoidance-goal orientation. Present study results show that parents, through their parenting style, can influence students' goal orientation. Therefore, Parents can promote their children to set goals other than performance avoidance by changing their styles of parenting. Because mothers' responsiveness and control have more crucial relation with goal orientation of students, mothers can do more for their boys and girls.

Among the sample, 58% of students have a performance orientation and only 34% have mastery orientation. Performance orientation will create more tension in students. Teachers and parents need to promote more mastery orientation along with performance orientation.

Negligent parenting results in more performance avoidance orientation in case of both girls and boys. Therefore, parents should be aware of the effects of their behavior with their child, so that they can adopt appropriate parenting style. Authoritative parenting promotes both performance and mastery approach orientation. Therefore, it is better to have an authoritative rearing pattern for a healthy goal orientation.

This study found important relation between parenting style and goal orientation of adolescents. The study is consistent with the findings of Baumrind that the authoritative parenting is the most effective parenting. So the parents should be aware that they would be affecting their wards' goal orientation through their responsiveness and control.

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