



Parenting Style and Adolescents' Achievement Strategies

Aunola, K., Stattin, H. & Nurmi, J. (2000). Parenting style and adolescents' achievement strategies. *Journal of Adolescence*, 23, 205-222. doi: 10.1006/jado.2000.0308.



354 Swedish eighth graders and their parents participated in a study investigating the extent to which adolescents' achievement strategies are associated with the parenting styles of their families. Four types of parenting styles were identified: authoritative (demanding and responsive), authoritarian (demanding, but not responsive), permissive (responsive, but not demanding), and neglectful (neither responsive nor demanding). Adolescents from authoritative families tended to use the most adaptive achievement strategy.

Key Findings:

- Authoritative families were characterized by high levels of responsiveness and demandingness; neglectful families were neither controlling nor responsive; permissive families were more child-centered, but had low parental control; and authoritarian families had a high level of parental control and a low level of parental trust.
- Young people from authoritative families were found to most often apply adaptive, task-oriented achievement strategies, and to have low levels of failure expectation, task-irrelevant behavior, and passivity.
- Young people from neglectful families used maladaptive, task-avoidant strategies, and demonstrated high levels of passivity and task-irrelevant behavior.
- Young people from authoritarian families demonstrated passivity and a lack of self-enhancing attributions.

Implications for Programs:

- Programs could provide classes for parents, providing information about the range of parenting styles and their associated outcomes for young people.
- Programs could offer activities for parents and young people to enjoy together, promoting healthy communication and shared leisure activity.

Implications for Policies:

- Policies could recommend professional development classes for family program workers about effective ways of empowering parents and helping them manage challenging child behaviors.
- Policies could allow parents flexibility in their work schedules, allowing them to participate in their children's activities during the school day.

Avenues for Future Research:

- Future research could attempt to replicate these findings in a United States youth population.
- Additional studies could examine the influence of mothers' and fathers' parenting studies separately.



Background Information

Methodology:

- All eighth grade students in a central Swedish community were invited to take part in the study, and 95% participated.
- Students completed questionnaires during school hours on their achievement strategies, well-being, and parenting styles of their families.
- Parents were contacted via mail and completed measures of parenting style and the achievement strategies of their children; 88% of the parents completed the questionnaires.

Participants:

- 354 Swedish eighth graders participated (50% girls).
- No additional demographic data was presented.

Limitations:

- The sample was Swedish; it is unknown how these results generalize to other youth.
- Very little demographic data was presented making the ability to generalize uncertain.
- The data are cross-sectional; causal hypotheses are inappropriate.
- Parent-reported parenting styles were by mothers, fathers, or both, which makes the conclusions somewhat unclear.

Assessing Research that Works

Research Design and Sample					Quality Rating:
	Excellent (★★★)	Appropriate (★★★)	Limited (★★★)	Questionable (★★★)	★★★☆☆
The design of the study (e.g., research plan, sample, recruitment) used to address the research question was....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Research Methods					Quality Rating:
	Excellent (★★★)	Appropriate (★★★)	Limited (★★★)	Questionable (★★★)	★★★☆☆
The research methods (e.g., measurement, analysis) used to answer the research question were...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Limitations					Quality Rating:
	Excellent Minor Limitations (★★★)	Appropriate Few Limitations (★★★)	Limited Several Limitations (★★★)	Questionable Many/Severe Limitations (★★★)	★★★☆☆
The limitations of this study are...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Implications					Quality Rating:
	Excellent (★★★)	Appropriate (★★★)	Limited (★★★)	Questionable (★★★)	★★★☆☆
The implications of this research to programs, policies and the field, stated by the authors, are...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable because authors do not discuss implications					
Overall Quality Rating					★★★☆☆