

## Parenting Styles and Emotional Stability: A Review of the Nexus and Implications for Counselling

### Author's Details:

<sup>(1)</sup>**Onolemhemhen, P.E. Ph.D**-Department of Guidance and Counselling Faculty of Education, Ambrose Alli University - Ekpoma-Edo State , **Tel:** +2348155547083 <sup>(2)</sup>**Oseghale Kenneth, Ph. D**-Department of Guidance and Counselling, Faculty of Education-Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma-Edo State-**Tel:** +2348100962381

### Abstract

*This paper evaluated the association between parenting styles and emotional stability from previous scholarly reviews. The paper clarified some issues on parenting styles and emotional stability. It was uncovered that parenting styles (permissive, authoritarian, authoritative parenting and neglectful/indifferent parenting styles) either directly or indirectly affect emotional stability of school age children. Therefore, the researcher provided some counselling implications and suggested that school guidance counsellors should endeavour to identify emotion disturbed children at school and provide them with the necessary guidance services needed to meet their emotional needs.*

**Keywords:** Parenting Styles, Emotional Stability, Counselling Implications

### Introduction

Humans are not just described as creatures of emotions. Their emotions describe their happiness, sadness and reactions to various situations that are confronted with per time. Emotional stability helps much in all spheres of life through its various constituents or components namely knowledge of one's emotions and handling relationships. Emotional stability is another layer of human mind which is constructive enough in exploring human stability by processing a scientific method. Such systematic understanding of human emotion to measure human stability will prove much beneficial in uplifting common success rate of contemporary education and its system (Akinboye, 2016). Thus, emotional stability essentially reflects our ability to deal successfully with other people and with our own feelings. Curiosity of the good academics needs to study such emotional stability to get the meaningful echoes of human heart.

It connotes the scientific human endeavour to bridge between two different human conditions of one human body, originating from head and heart respectively. Such collaboration of meaningful human emotions plays a pivotal role in deciding human achievement. Emotions rule the heart while stability reigns supreme in the brain. The qualities are inseparable and they exercise tremendous influence in the lives of individuals. Emotional stability can make a unique contribution to a better understanding of people and also use their potential to success (Akinboye, 2016). The intellectual behaviour of a person is meaningfully decided by the emotional state of his or her mind.

Discussing the level of emotional stability, Goleman, Boyatzis and McKee (2015) submitted that there are varying levels of emotional stability associated with set of competencies that differentiate children with emotional stability. They noted that varying levels of emotional stability associated with the competencies fall into four clusters, namely, a) self-awareness (understanding of own emotions, powers, weaknesses, needs and awareness of self-existence), b) self-management (managing own emotional behaviour), c) social awareness (ability to understand emotions and needs of others and thus putting oneself into others' shoes); and d) relationship management (ability to establish relationships with other individuals and to ensure sustainability of such relationships, creating and managing a team) (Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee, 2015). They argued from two extreme points that complete absence or possession of the four competencies is rare. Hence, while some students demonstrate the high possession of one or more competencies, some exhibit low levels of others. This could explain while a university undergraduate, for instance, may be high in self-awareness and low in self-management; and another could exhibit high level of relationship management but be relatively low in one or more other competencies - self-awareness, self-management and social awareness.

Therefore, the main thrust of this paper is to examine the association between parenting styles and emotional stability. Specifically, this study set out to achieve the following purposes: a) to clarify the

concept of parenting styles and emotional stability: b) to review literature on the association between parenting styles and emotional stability: c) make conclusions and suggestions on the study: and d) examine the counselling implications of the review.

### **Conceptual Clarification**

Two basic terms – parenting styles and emotional stability were defined for better understanding of the subject matter of the paper

**Parenting styles:** The general approach and pattern with which parents interact with their children to promote their physical, emotional, social and intellectual development is known as parenting styles. Parenting style is not just about individual behaviour of parents but also includes the pattern of relationships between parents and child. It has often been seen as the physical and psychosocial well-being of children and parents within a given family unit (Cripps & Zyromski, 2016).

Parenting is parental behaviours which encompass pleasures, privileges, and profits as well as frustrations, fears, and failures. Thus, parents can find an interest and derive considerable and continuing pleasure in their relationships and activities with their children (Dawkins, 2006). There are nine parenting styles that were suggested by Baumrind (2015). These are; authoritative, demanding, traditional, authoritarian, undifferentiated, democratic, permissive, nondirective, and rejecting-neglecting. However current researchers have found out that parenting styles are often adapted by previous generations (Brown & Iyengar, 2018) and are passed down by culture. Weiss and Schwarz (2016) conceptualized it in terms of parent-child interaction, parents' communication styles, disciplinary strategies, warmth and nurturance, and child-control.

**Emotional Stability:** Mayer, Salovey and Caruso (2015) defined the concept of emotional stability as the capacity to reason about emotions, and of emotions to enhance thinking. Emotional stability includes the abilities to accurately perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions in order to assist thoughts, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions in order to promote emotional and intellectual growth (Mayer *et al.*, 2015). Emotional Stability (ES) is often delineated as one's tendency to distinguish, evaluate and handle emotional status of his own and others' to attain certain objectives (Choudary, 2016).

Another definition of this important construct in human resource management, referred to emotional stability as the designated ability to make use of the emotional condition of an individual, group or own-self to attain a certain goal or a set of goals or objectives (Fox & Spector, 2000). This concept could be reflected upon as the ability to appreciate the emotions and categorize their possible outcomes and finally through this knowledge helps to attain expected goals (Choudary, 2016). The ability to appreciate allows an individual to recognize and regulate emotions, develop self-control, set goals, develop empathy, resolve conflicts, and develop skills needed for leadership and effective group participation (Elias, 2004).

### **Parenting Styles and Emotional Stability among Students**

The four parenting styles that are commonly discussed in literature include: a) permissive parenting style, b) authoritarian parenting style, c) authoritative parenting style and d) neglectful/indifferent parenting style (Akomolafe & Adesua, 2016). The association between the foregoing styles and their emotional stability are reviewed below:

**Permissive parenting styles:** Permissive parents believe in making sure that their children are happy. Brown and Iyengar (2018) explained that parents who practice permissive parenting; often have a rough time as they often go extra mile to ensure they will do everything they can to make their children happy. As a result, permissive parents tend to be highly responsive to their children's needs and desires, and display low levels of demandingness. Hence, these parents are extremely supportive, to the extent that the child winds up taking control of the situation. In many ways, this style is the opposite of the authoritarian style. Permissive parents often believe that, "*Nothing is too good for my child.*" And they will readily go out of their way (Brown & Iyengar, 2018).

Permissive parenting style is one in which parents are quite democratic toward the impulses, activities and desires of their children while consulting with them about family choices. In this regard, the fact remains that nobody enjoys being ignored. Therefore, parents who consult their children before making

certain decisions that concern them, listen to their grievances and take to the suggestions of their children or wards when necessary could be said to be promoting their emotional stability and ensuring their emotional balance. This is because depriving a child the privilege of being involved in certain decision making matters could make a child feel denied of his right, unwanted, and unimportant as a member of the family. Regrettably, this could stir some form of emotional disturbances that could disturb a child's concentration, lesson assimilation and adversely affect their emotional stability.

Parents in the lenient pattern of permissive parenting are composed of democratic, permissive and undifferentiated parents. Democratic parents are high responsive and medium demanding while permissive parents are low or medium demanding and high responsive (Baumrind, 2015). Also, parents in this type highly accept their children and make some demands for the children's behaviour. The parents allow their children fundamental self-regulation. Children of the undifferentiated parents would be expected to have the greater risk for emotional and behavioural problems (Doyle, 2016).

When parents adopted the permissive style of parenting, their children display several predictable outcomes. First, these children are the most at risk for becoming spoiled children. They tend to grow up thinking that they should always get what they desire. Second, these children tend to become highly demanding themselves. They often form the impression that the world owes them something, just because they are so special. Third, these children tend to display impatience with people who don't readily give them everything they want. Fourth, these children tend to display relatively poor social skills. They are less likely than other children to be concerned with the welfare of others, or to sacrifice their own needs. Part of the problem is that they expect their friends' lives to revolve around making them happy (Constanzo, 2014).

**Authoritarian parenting style:** Authoritarian style of parenting is characterized by ensuring children follow strict rules established by parents. Failure to follow such rules usually results in punishment. Authoritarian parents fail to explain the reasoning behind these rules. If asked to explain, the parent might simply reply, "*Because I said so.*" These parents have high demands, but are not responsive to their children. Parents in the restrictive pattern of parenting are identified as authoritarian. They attempt to sharpen, control, and evaluate the behaviour and attitude of their children which is usually formulated by a higher secular authority. These parents are high on demandingness and low on responsiveness. Additionally, children and adolescents with authoritarian parents were reported as having low self-esteem and spontaneity, as well as withdrawal, antisocial, and delinquent behaviours. Parents in this pattern value obedience as a virtue and are punitive and forceful (Baumrind, 2015).

**Authoritative parenting style:** Authoritative parenting style is another style of parenting that is characterized by strict controls, use of force in initiating personal interest, high demandingness, imposition of decisions, and the rare taking of suggestions. It is common knowledge that many often consider authoritative parenting style to be one that may demoralize a child, low their academic self-worth and eventually affect their emotional stability among their peers at school. For instance, frequently yelling at a child to study and compelling such child to do an task contrary to their will, ability and capability could make such child feel inadequate and emotionally imbalance (Baumrind, 2015).

The parents with an authoritative parenting style usually establish rules and guidelines that their children are expected to follow. However, this parenting style is much more democratic and the parents are more responsive to their children and willing to listen to questions. When children fail to meet the expectations, these parents is more nurturing and forgiving rather than punishing. Baumrind (2015) suggests that these parents usually monitor and impart clear standards for their children's conduct; they are assertive, but not intrusive and restrictive. Their disciplinary methods are always supportive, rather than punitive since they want their children to be assertive as well as socially responsible, and self-regulated as well as cooperative.

Authoritative parents reasonably attempt to direct their children's activities and use more warm control, positivity during communication, feelings-oriented reasoning as well as induction, and more responsiveness to children's questions. Interestingly, adolescents with authoritative parents reported higher grades in school performance than adolescents with neglectful parents, and demonstrated stronger school orientation, school engagement, and bonding with teachers than adolescents with neglectful parents (Steinberg, Eisengart, & Cauffman, 2017).

Authoritative parents have medium level of responsiveness and high demanding (Baumrind, 2015). However, traditional parents exhibited a different structural role between mothers and fathers. For example,

mothers are highly responsive however, relatively understanding. In contrast, fathers are highly demanding, but quite coercive and non-responsive. The foregoing shows that authoritative parenting style may promote or adversely affect the development of a child psychologically and socially. The direct opposite of the authoritative style is one parenting style where the child does not get a sufficient measure of emotional support, physical time of the parent, basic needs such as food, shelter, health, care, childhood play and academic support is called “neglectful or uninvolved parents”.

**Neglectful/indifferent parenting style:** Neglectful parenting style is characterized by few demands, low responsiveness and little communication. While these parents fulfill the child's basic needs, they are generally detached from their child's life. In extreme cases, these parents may even reject or neglect the needs of their children (Baumrind, 2015). Parents in who practice neglectful parenting styles are exemplified in rejecting-neglecting and non-directive parents. By contrast, non-directive parents are low demanding and medium responsive while rejecting-neglecting parents are low relative to both demandingness and responsiveness and are unlikely to take part in their children’s activities.

Interestingly, neglectful parenting style tend to display low levels of demandingness since they ask and expect very little of their children. For instance, they rarely assign their children chores. These parents also display low levels of responsiveness to their children. They tend to be relatively uninvolved in their children's lives. As a result, these parents tend to grant their children a very high degree of freedom to do as they wish. In addition, these parents tend not to be very communicative with their children. The child outcomes associated with the neglectful style of parenting are somewhat predictable. In general, these children tend to display poor social skills (Constanzo, 2014).

The relative lack of social interactions with adults at home does little to prepare them for social interactions outside the home. On the other hand, they tend to come across as emotionally needy. That is, these children appear to seek emotional guidance and reassurance from others, especially in their close relationships. This is consistent with a tendency of these children to display moderately low levels of self-esteem. This makes them somewhat vulnerable to others who may try to take advantage of them. Unlike the children of authoritarian or tough love parents, their verbal skills and initiative tend to remain intact, though not as good as children of authoritative parents. However, these children often display difficulties with self-discipline, in part for lack of practice. This discipline issues finally translates in the child’s academic performance and therefore display poor results as compared to children in authoritarian and authoritative parenting styles (Gadeye, Ghesquire & Ongheria, 2014).

It is generally agreed that parenting styles influence self-efficacy, self-esteem and emotional stability of learners (Brown & Iyengar, 2018). In addition, the emotional balance is influenced by the decision that is made by both parents. For instance, there is a positive outcome for both parents and children when parents interact in a fun and loving way during children’s homework time (Alika, Akanni, & Akanni, 2017). Conversely, when parents are neglectful, emotional disturbances and problem behaviours are generated (Singaravelu, 2017; Brown & Iyengar, 2018). Further, parents are seen to communicate their characteristics or explanations for their children in terms of day-to-day interactions and behaviour with their children. Therefore, parents are influenced by their children’s emotional stability, and children’s emotional stability in turn, influences their parents (Sulaiman, 2013).

The foundation for parenting style is formed by the belief systems and attitudes in parents and their children (Brown & Iyengar, 2018). In general, children are enhanced by authoritative parents and show higher academic competence, social development, self-perception, and mental health compared to children with authoritarian and permissive parents (Baumrind, 2015). Authoritative parents tend to engage in discussions with their child before a more or less joint decision is rendered. Authoritarian and permissive parents, however, tend not to engage in discussions. Instead, unilateral decisions are the norm, with authoritarian parents and children of permissive parents making the decisions. However, the researcher has observed that most families are not completely democratic or undemocratic decision makers. Alika, Akanni and Akanni (2017) examined the relationship between parenting style/family characteristics and adolescents’ emotional stability in University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria. The result shows that higher levels of control, which is characteristic of both authoritative and authoritarian parenting styles, may be a critical factor in the development of emotional stability among adolescents.

## Implications for Counselling

Counsellors have often been applauded for the vital role they play in providing necessary information on emotional management through their various services. According to Bindu and Padmanabhan (2016), the increase in scientific discoveries and technological advancement in recent times has made information, counselling and orientation services of counsellors quite needful in every area of building quality parenting relationship. Generally, the needs of learners are numerous and border on physical, social, affective, cognitive, and sexual needs.

The Maslow's theory of motivation places the needs of man in five hierarchical orders ranging from the first stage of basic needs - food, shelter and clothing to social/emotional needs at the second stage. The role of the home and parents as the first agent of a child's socialization holds a significant place in character formation of a child. From birth, a parent will mould and shape behaviours suitable to the norms of society through childrearing. Hence, learning acceptable behaviour is a part of socialization process of a child at home. Considering the prevalence of domestic violence, parental negligence, and poor economic status of parents among others, Hence, parenting styles may pose a lot of implications for Counselling.

- Considering the susceptibility and vulnerability of learners to various defective parenting behaviours; there is a need for counselling intervention programme to make parents understand their roles in parenting well-adjusted children that are useful to the society and the world of work. This can be done by making public counsellors, professional counsellors, Community based organizations (CBOs) and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) work together as a team to enlighten parents about the implications of their parenting styles on their children.
- It behooves on counselling educators to educate school age children on their emotional management, peer relations and sexual behaviours including the dangers of unprotected sex to avoid sexually transmitted diseases such as gonorrhoea, syphilis, HIV/AIDs. Many students are exposed to these ills simply because they are poorly parented. To manage this, counselling educators can provide learners and parents with their information and orientation services using various mass media platforms like social media, newspapers and television media among others.

## Conclusion

Emotions come before thought and behaviour. Our feelings fine up the engine that drives our enthusiasm, energy, competitiveness and creativity. Nothing great has ever been accomplished without the power of emotions behind it. Therefore, emotional stability can be said to be very crucial because it involves everything that is going on - memory, thinking, imagination and even perception of our surroundings. Interestingly, emotional stability can be affected by several factors ranging from parental, sociological and personal factors. Among other parental, sociological and personal factors; the influence of various parenting styles were discussed.

In light of the review, four types of parenting styles - authoritative, authoritarian, neglectful and permissive parenting styles were discussed. Based on the review, it was uncovered that authoritative and authoritarian parenting styles may adversely affect the emotional stability of learners because they all possess some attributes of strict controls, use of force in initiating personal interest, high demandingness, imposition of decisions, and the rare taking of suggestions. On the other extreme, neglectful parenting could also do the child some emotional harm in that it is characterized by minimal amount of involvement or reaction towards their children's needs. For instance, a neglectful parent may show concern about the child's education by paying their tuition fee as at when due but yet; pay zero attention towards their welfare at school. They make almost no request from their children; this implies they do not bother their discipline. They are emotionally detached from their children; thereby make the child unaccountable to anyone. Neglectful parents are to a great degree dismissive, unconcerned or even oblivious to the child's need. These parents either do not supervise their children at all or keep them grounded continually.

Permissive parents is a style of parenting that tend to be highly responsive to their children's needs and desires, and display low levels of demandingness that encourages emotional stability in children. Lastly emotional stability may also affect a learners'. This is because the tendency to conform to a group or stay among a set of peers could exert some influence on a learners' behaviour. Naturally, most young learners tend to be more comfortable relating with their peers than any other age group. Consequently, it becomes

seemingly harmful when a learner with low emotional stability exhibit some inferiority complex and thereby feels compelled to conform to the behaviour of one or more of his peers.

### Recommendations

Having discussed some factors affecting emotional stability, the following recommendations are proffered:

- 1) Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Community Based organisations (CBOs) and Child support initiatives (CSIs) should use mass media campaign to inform parents/guardian about the possible effect of their parenting styles on the children/wards. In this regard, the some parenting tips on how to raise emotionally based children can be made public in several local languages via the newspapers, television, radio adverts and social media platforms.
- 2) To manage, guidance and counselling unit should be established in schools at all levels to afford students the opportunity of receiving information and orientation services about how to coping with manage emotional instability.
- 3) To help develop student develop a positive emotional stability, school administrators such as head teachers and principals should employ a combination of emotional/cognitive mind training among learners through indoor seminars. This can be done by bring in resource persons to teach students on how they can understand their temperaments, potentials, weaknesses, strengths and in consequently use such information to manage possible emotional disturbances in their personal, academic and career life.

### References

- i. *Akinboye, T. O. (2016), Adolescent Personal Data Inventory. Ibadan: University- of Ibadan Press*
- ii. *Akomolafe, C. O. & Adesua, V. O. (2016). The impact of physical facilities on students' level of motivation and academic performance in Senior Secondary Schools in South West Nigeria. Journal of Education and Practice. 7(4): 38-42.*
- iii. *Alika, H.I., Akanni, D.O., & Akanni, O.O. (2017). The relationship between parenting style/family characteristics and adolescents' emotional stability in University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria. International Journal of Psychology and Counselling. 8(9), 102-108.*
- iv. *Baumrind, D. (2015). Pattern of parental authority and adolescent autonomy: New Directions for Child and Adolescent. Development.108(23),61-69.*
- v. *Brown, L., & Iyengar, S. (2018). Parenting styles: The impact on student achievement. Marriage & Family Review. 43(1-2), 14-38.*
- vi. *Choudary, Y. (2016). Impact of the emotional stability on work related outcomes among the nursing staff at SRM hospitals. CHENNAI. (1): 11-19.*
- vii. *Constanzo. P (2014). Domain specific parenting styles. Journal of social and clinical psychology. 3 (4), 1-16*
- viii. *Cripps, K., & Zyromski, B. (2016). Adolescent psychological wellbeing and perceived parental involvement: implication of parental involvement in middle school. Research in Middle Level Education Online, 33:1-13.*
- ix. *Dawkins, S. (2006). Domain specific parenting styles. Journal of social and clinical psychology. 3 (4), 12 – 23.*
- x. *Doyle, W. (2016). Classroom organization and management. Handbook of research on teaching. New York. Macmillan.*

- xi. *Elias,H, (2004). Adjustment amongst first year students in a Malaysian University, European Journal of Social sciences,vol.8,No.3,496-505.*
- xii. *Gadeye, W. G., Ghesquire, S. R.Ongheria, J.(2004). Behavioral dis-hibition and the development of substance-use disorders: Findings from the Minnesota Twin Family Study. Development and Psychopathology journal. Vol 11 pp 869–900.*
- xiii. *Goleman, D., Boyatzis, R. E., & McKee, A. (2015). Primal Leadership: Realizing the power of Emotional Stability. Harvar Business Press.*
- xiv. *Mayer, J.D., Salovey, P. & Caruso, D.R. (2015). Emotional Stability: Theory, findings and implications. Psychological Inquiry. 15(3): 197–215.*
- xv. *Singaravelu, S. (2017) Emotional stability of student teachers (pre-service) at primary level in Puducherry Region. M.Ed. Dissertation.*
- xvi. *Steinberg, L. Lamborn, S.D., Darling, N., Mounts, N.S. & Dornbusch, S.M. (2017). Over-time changes in adjustment and competence among adolescent from authoritative, authoritarian, indulgent and neglectful families. Child Development, 63(3),754-777.*
- xvii. *Sulaiman, S.M.A. (2013). Emotional Intelligence, depression and psychological Adjustment among University students in the sultanate of Oman. International Journal of Psychological studies. 5(3), 169-181.*
- xviii. *Weiss, L. H., & Schwarz, J. C. (2016). The relationship between parenting types and older adolescents' personality, academic achievement, adjustment, and substance use. Child Development, 67, 2101–2114*
- xix. *Wolters, C. A. & Rosenthal, H. (2017). “The relationship between students' motivational regulation strategies”. International Journal of Educational Research, 33 (8),801 – 820.*