
Perception of Young Adults about Parenting Styles in Edo Central Senatorial District

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Abstract

The study investigates the perception of the young adults about the parenting styles of their parents. The study drew data from 288 young adults purposively selected from Edo State Senatorial District. The data were collected with the use of questionnaire and the data obtained were analysed using mean and standard deviation. The finding of the study showed that neglectful parenting cum permissive parenting were ranked above other in the study area. In addition, fathers rather than mothers were ranked to be neglectful and permissive by the young adults. The study therefore recommends that government should engage in family re-orientation, which will involve teaching the parents about appropriate parenting style.

Keywords: Parenting stylw, Perception, Young adults, Parents

Introduction

The important of the parents in the society cannot never be overemphasised; in the sense that, the parents provide first contact for a child. As such, the parents become the first representative of what the larger society is to a child. It is from the parents that a child first learns the norms and rules of the society, where they grows into. The parents provide the environment, in which a child is exposed to the culture, social and moral of the people group they belong to (Zahedani, Rezaee, Yazdani, Bagheri and Nabeiep, 2016). It can be said that the parents determine to some extent the future upbringing and survival of the child in the world.

This means that being a parent does not only entail possess the birthing skill; it also embraces having the parenting skill (Adegbola, 2019). The parenting skill enables the parents actualise their roles as parents; and the expectation of the society is that every parent should exhibit good parenting. Parenting entails “raising, promoting, and supporting the physical, emotional, social, and cognitive development of a child into adulthood and across the lifespan” (Brook, 2012). Thus, parenting entails taking a child through every stage of development such as the one outlined by Erik Erikson (1950); which enables the child to grow into wholesome adults. In regard to this, parents adopt style of parenting that suit and they view as acceptable in fulfilling their duties as parents.

Different parent styles have been identified in the literature, which include autocratic parenting, authoritarian parenting, authoritative parenting, permissive parenting and neglectful parenting (Baumrind, 1966; Maccoby and Martin, 1983). Each of the parenting styles has strengths and weaknesses. Some have been seen as effective for children proper development while others have been perceived as leaving children with some mental disorder (Baumrind, 1966; Cherry, 2015; Sarwar, 2015; Buot & Merin, 2021). Since the children are the beneficiaries of whatever parenting styles adopted by their parents, in terms of the future outcomes, it is necessary to investigate the perception of these children when they get to adulthood and they can reflect on the parenting styles of their parents have molded their lives positively or negatively. It is on

this basis that this study has aim of investigating the perception of young adults about the parenting styles of their parents in Edo Central Senatorial District of Edo State.

Literature review

Conceptual review

Parenting

In the views of Krectchmar- Hendricks (n.d), the term ‘parenting’ encompasses the entire “process of raising children and providing them with protection and care in order to ensure their healthy development into adulthood” (para. 1). From the perspective of National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities (2021), parenting is a “process that prepares your child for independence” (para. 1). From these two definitions, it can be said that parenting is about nurturing and raising a child from birth into someone that is independent and healthy mentally, emotionally, and socially at adulthood.

Parenting style

Darling and Steinberg (1993) “conceptualises the parenting styles as a constellation of attitudes toward the child that are communicated to the child, and that, taken together, create an emotional climate in which the parents' behaviors are expressed” (p.487). Lenin (2011) adds that parenting styles refer to the typical ways parents think, feel and behave in terms of child-rearing. Onuha (2021) emphasizes that every parent consciously or unconsciously adopts a parenting approach, often influenced by their upbringing or chosen strategies. These authors have shown that parents bring up their children in diverse ways and these ways are product of their thoughts about children rearing and nurturing, which manifest in their views about discipline.

Theoretical Framework

Diana Baumrind's Pillar Theory

Diana Baumrind is one of the pioneers in the field of parenting style and she propounded a theory, which was called ‘Diana Baumrind’s Pillar Theory in 1966. She was a developmental psychologist. In theory of parenting style, she categorised parenting styles into three- authoritative, authoritarian and permissive. The neglectful (or uninvolved) parenting style was added by Maccoby and Martin (1983). In the words of Baumrind, the parenting styles exerted to some extent the social competence, academic performance and psychological wellbeing of children. In summary, she sees the children of authoritative parents being possess high levels of self- esteem, social competence and academic success while the children of the authoritarian parents are characterised by anxiety, low self - esteem and less socially adept (Baumrind, 1971). She went further to describe the children of permissive parents of displaying some behavioural problem and poor academic performance (Baumrind, 1971). The later addition, which is neglectful (uninvolved) parents raised that are characterised by poor academic outcomes and risky behaviour. This theory showed that parenting should be characterised by balancing warmth and discipline.

Erik Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory

The Psychosocial Development Theory is a product of Erik Erikson in 1950. Erikson outlined eight psychosocial stages from infancy to adulthood, which formed their human development. According to Erikson, the success of passing through these stages depend on the parents; and parents determine how a child navigates through these stages (Erikson, 1950). Erikson argues that a child who successfully develop wholesome attitude and resolve conflict easily in later years have parents, who have helped them in pass through each of the psychosocial stages. From the theory, it can be seen that neglectful parents can lead a child into life of mistrust and anxiety in infancy (Erikson, 1950). Similarly, authoritarian parent can promote shame and doubt in children due to strict control in early childhood. Furthermore, neglectful parents may

hinder the power to have purpose or initiative in preschool age children (Erikson, 1963). Lastly, the authoritarian parents may use their rigidity lifestyle to make their children think they are inferior; hence become victims of inferiority complex (Erikson, 1968). This theory has supported Baumrind's theory in relation to authoritative parenting style; in the sense that, children who develop the psychosocial strengths necessary for survival in later years must have had authoritative parents.

Empirical review

Using 360 participants from some selected schools in Kwara State, Ishola and Taiwo (2015) investigated the relationship between parenting styles and the academic performance. Ishola and Taiwo's finding showed that gender matters in the performance of authoritative parenting style while gender did not matter for permissive parenting style. The focus of Pila and Tyowua (n.d) is on how parenting styles affect morality of secondary school students in Benue State. The findings from the survey conducted on 315 students showed that children morality is positive influenced by the authoritarian parenting styles while deficiency of morality was observed in children from authoritative and permissive parents. Furthermore is the study of Abang, Anake and Sampson (2018), which has interest on discipline and parenting styles among secondary school students in Northern Cross River State. Using ANOVA as a technique of estimation, Abang, Anake and Sampson found out that laissez- faire and autocratic parents produced children with some level of indiscipline.

Another study, which focused on parenting styles and academic performance is by Obinu (2018) and this study was conducted among Secondary School students in Delta State, Nigeria. Obinu discovered that authoritarian parenting and permissive parenting styles do not exert significant impact on academic performance but there was statistical evidence to support that authoritative parenting styles exerted significant impact on students' academic performance. The interest of Ebute, Attah and Maisamari (2020) was on how parenting styles influence moral development of secondary school students in Abuja. Ebute, Attah and Maisamari selected 381 students randomly from the selected schools and found out that many of the students perceived as autocratic parenting as choice of their parents; and such students admitted that it has helped them morally. The study by Aniemeka et al. (2021) explored the relationship between parenting styles and psychopathological symptoms among adolescents in secondary school in Ogun State.

Aniemeka et al. showed that prevalent of psychopathological symptoms among students, which was as high as 52.1 percent among the survey of 1,028 adolescents, was caused by the parenting style commonly in the area. Aniemeka et al indicated that neglecting parenting is paramount among the people. Meremu and Idoko (2021) also investigated the parenting styles and academic performance among secondary school students in Benue. The authors' results showed that authoritative parenting positively associated with improved academic performance; but neglectful parenting exhibited negative association with academic performance. Similar to the study of Ebute, Attah and Maisamari (2020) is the study by Idowu and Akinleye (2022), which assessed the influence of parenting styles on moral behaviour among secondary school students in Southwest Nigeria. From a sample of 1500 students, Idowu and Akinleye discovered that authoritative parenting enhanced the moral upbringing of students. One of the recent studies on parenting styles and academic performance was Onwunyili and Obi (2023) of adolescent girls in public secondary schools in Kabba- Bunu L.G.A. Onwunyili and Obi's results showed that authoritarian parents were more effective in influencing academic outcomes of the female students. Another recent study is by Folorunsho et al. (2024) and the study examined the relationship between parenting styles and juvenile delinquency. Folorunsho et al. showed that parenting styles increase the chance of having a child misbehaving.

Methodology

The study is designed as the descriptive research as it investigates the perception of the young adults about parenting styles in Edo State Senatorial District, Edo State. The population for this study was taken from all young adults in Edo Senatorial District in Edo State. 288 young adults were purposively selected from the total number of young adults in Edo State Senatorial District, Edo State. The use of purposive sampling method allow the researchers to focus on specific people relevant to the study such as parents and members of the society that are older than 18 and not married. The researcher made use of primary sources to obtain some vital information on the current prevailing parenting lifestyle in Nigeria. The researcher employed questionnaire to elicit the necessary information on the parenting style used by the Nigerian parent in the contemporary time. The questionnaire came in two categories. The questionnaire was divided into three parts: Section A deals with demographic characteristics of the respondents; Section B deals with the items relating to the perception of the respondents about their fathers; and Section C deals with the items relating to perception of the respondents about their mothers. The Section B and Section C have statements, which describe the attitudes of their parents in terms of parenting styles. Section B and Section C contained 30 statements, which are categorised into:

S/No.	Parenting styles	No of statements
1	Autocratic parenting	5
2	Authoritarian parenting	5
3	Authoritative parenting	10
4	Neglectful parenting	3
5	Permissive parenting	7

Source: Authors' survey

Each of the statements in the questionnaire was designed as a structured item on a 5 – point Likert Scale, which were Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The scores assigned were as follows: SA (5); A (4); N (3); D (2); and SD (1). In case of negative statements, the scores were reversed as: SA (1); A (2); N (2); D (4); and SD (5). The study adopted descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, percentage, mean and standard deviation.

4.0 Data analysis and discussions

The results of the survey conducted among young adults in Edo State is presented in this section. The analysis started with the explanation of the results obtained on each of the major parenting styles reported in the literature such as autocratic parenting, authoritarian parenting, authoritative parenting, neglectful parenting and permissive parenting.

Table 1: Perception of parents as being autocratic

S/No.	Statement	Father Mean (SD)	Mother Mean (SD)	Both Mean (SD)
1	Expected immediate obedience without questions	2.49 (0.13)	2.49 (0.14)	2.49 (0.14)
2	Teaching children early who is the boss	2.82 (0.12)	2.67 (0.12)	2.75 (0.12)
3	Got upset when disagreed with	2.79 (0.12)	2.66 (0.12)	2.73 (0.12)
4	Insisted on conformity out of respect for authority	2.35 (0.14)	2.37 (0.14)	2.36 (0.14)

5	Did not allow questioning of decisions	2.92 (0.11)	2.83 (0.10)	2.88 (0.10)
		2.67	2.60	2.64
	Total (Overall)	(0.12)	(0.12)	(0.12)

Source: Authors' computation

In Table 1, we reported the perception of the young adults about the parent styles of their parents. We can easily compare how they perceived the attitude of their parents in regards to being autocratic. We can see that the fathers were ranked to be more autocratic than their mothers. The overall mean for the fathers was 2.67 compared to that of the mother, which was 2.60. The presence of autocratic parenting can be seen in the way the young adults ranked statements such as 'parents not allowing questioning of decisions'; 'teaching the children who is the boss'; and 'getting upset when disagreed with'. The values of mean, which were 2.88, 2.75 and 2.73 respectively, indicated prevalent of these attitudes among the parents in the sampled area. The respondents ranked their fathers higher than their mothers in the demonstration of these behaviour at home.

Table 2: Perception of parents as being authoritarian

S/No.	Statements	Father Mean (SD)	Mother Mean (SD)	Both Mean (SD)
1	Forced conformity for children's good	2.55 (0.13)	2.36 (0.15)	2.50 (0.14)
2	Felt more force should be used	3.04 (0.11)	2.85 (0.12)	2.95 (0.12)
3	Punished unmet expectations	2.59 (0.13)	2.54 (0.13)	2.57 (0.13)
4	Believed strictness would solve social problems	2.51 (0.13)	2.70 (0.12)	2.61 (0.13)
5	Told exactly what to do and how	2.51 (0.13)	2.70 (0.12)	2.61 (0.13)
	Total (Overall)	2.64 (0.13)	2.63 (0.13)	2.64 (0.13)

Source: Authors' computation

Table 2 showed how the young adults perceived their parents as being authoritarian. The overall mean is 2.64, which close to 5, on the 5 – point Likert Scale. This showed that the parents were likely to have some attributes of authoritarian. Statements such as 'felt more force should be used'; 'told exactly what to do'; and 'believed strictness would solve social problems' have relatively high values for the mean on the 5- point Likert Scale. These values of mean tend to show good statistical reason to accept that the parents of the respondents exhibited some attributes of authoritarian parenting. There is minimal difference in the values of mean obtained for fathers and mothers; as such, we cannot conclude that there is difference in how the young adults perceived either parents as authoritarian.

Table 3: Perception of parents as being authoritative

S/No	Statements	Father Mean (SD)	Mother Mean (SD)	Both Mean (SD)
1	Discussed reasoning behind policies	2.70 (0.12)	2.36 (0.14)	2.53 (0.13)
2	Encouraged verbal give-and-take	2.99 (0.11)	2.81 (0.12)	2.90 (0.12)
3	Directed using reasoning and discipline	2.37 (0.14)	2.27 (0.15)	2.32 (0.15)
4	Expected behavior, but open to discussion	2.62 (0.12)	2.38 (0.15)	2.50 (0.14)
5	Gave rational and objective guidance	2.28 (0.15)	2.30 (0.15)	2.29 (0.15)
6	Considered children's opinions but remained firm	2.67 (0.12)	2.47 (0.14)	2.57 (0.13)
7	Clear standards, flexible to individual needs	2.60 (0.13)	2.46 (0.14)	2.53 (0.14)
8	Gave direction but listened to concerns	2.50 (0.13)	2.31 (0.15)	2.41 (0.14)
9	Clear direction with understanding	2.71 (0.12)	2.61 (0.13)	2.66 (0.13)
10	Willing to discuss hurtful decisions and admit mistakes	2.77 (0.12)	2.51 (0.13)	2.64 (0.13)
	Total (Overall)	2.61 (0.13)	2.49 (0.14)	2.54 (0.13)

Source: Authors' computation

From Table 3, we can see the responses of the young adults as perceived their parent being authoritative. The overall mean value of 2.54 is not high enough to be statistically considered that these parents have some attributes of being authoritative. The comparison of the same value for fathers and mothers revealed great disparity. The mean value of 2.61 for father is greater than the mean value of 2.49 for mothers in the sample area. From these statistics, it can be said that fathers were seen to be more authoritative than mothers. There were two statements that one should have expected to have high value of mean. These statements were 'directed using reasoning and discipline'; and 'give rational and objective guidance'; and they were essential characteristics of authoritative parenting, according to Baumrind (1961). These two statements had abysmal values of mean; which showed that these parents might have demonstrated weak form of authoritative parenting to their children.

Table 4: Perception of parents as being permissive

S/No	Statements	Fathers Mean (SD)	Mothers Mean (SD)	Both Mean (SD)
1	Felt children should have their way as often as parents	3.39 (0.13)	3.12 (0.14)	3.26 (0.13)
2	Believed children should be free to do what they want	3.39 (0.13)	3.24 (0.12)	3.32 (0.13)
3	Did not feel children should obey authority blindly	3.55 (0.13)	3.46 (0.13)	3.51 (0.13)

4	Usually did what children wanted in family decisions	3.19 (0.12)	2.99 (0.11)	3.09 (0.12)
5	Believed problems stem from restricting children	3.24 (0.12)	3.13 (0.11)	(3.19) 0.12
6	Allowed independent decisions with little direction	3.37 (0.12)	3.18 (0.12)	3.28 (0.12)
7	Allowed forming own views and decisions	3.01 (0.11)	2.87 (0.11)	2.94 (0.11)
		3.31 (0.12)	3.14 (0.12)	3.22 (0.12)
	Total (Overall)			

Source: Authors' computation

In Table 4, we have the responses of the young adults about how they perceived their parents as being permissive. The overall value of the mean for both parents was 3.22, which showed that statistically the parents exhibited permissive parenting. This value is very high and close to 5, on the 5- point Likert Scale. In addition, the values of mean were high for the fathers and the mothers; as such, it can be concluded that fathers were more permissive than the mothers in the house. The characteristics of permissive parenting such as 'Did not feel children should obey authority blindly'; 'Felt children should have their way as often as parents'; 'Believed children should be free to do what they want'; and 'Allowed independent decisions with little direction' had the following values of mean 3.51, 3.32, 3.26, and 3.28 respectively. All these values were statistically high, considering their closeness to 5, which is the highest obtainable value on 5 – point Likert Scale. These values were good statistical evidence to exert that permissive parents were highly paramount among the parents in the sampled area.

Table 5: Perception of parents as being neglectful

S/No.	Statements	Fathers Mean (SD)	Mothers Mean (SD)	Both Mean (SD)
1	Seldom gave expectations or guidelines	2.81 (0.11)	2.68 (0.12)	2.75 (0.12)
2	Did not see himself as responsible for guiding behaviour	3.49 (0.13)	3.45 (0.13)	3.47 (0.13)
3	Did not direct behaviours, activities, or desires	3.49 (0.13)	3.43 (0.13)	3.46 (0.13)
		3.26 (0.12)	3.19 (0.13)	3.23 (0.13)
	Total (Overall)			

Source: Authors' computation

Table 5 provided us the perception of the young adults about their parents being neglectful. The overall mean value of 3.23 showed that there was statistical evidence to conclude that the parents exhibited high tendency to be neglectful. The value of mean of 3.26 is closed to maximum obtainable value of 5, on the 5- point Likert Scale. In addition, the responses of the young adults on statements such as 'did not see himself as responsible for guiding behaviour'; and 'did not direct behaviours, activities, or desires' were statistically high. These values were 3.47 and 3.46 respectively. They were strong statistical evidence to conclude that the parents exhibited great attitudes of neglectful parenting.

S/No.	Parenting style	Mean	Rank
1	Autocratic parenting	2.64	3rd

2	Authoritarian parenting	2.64	3rd
3	Authoritative parenting	2.54	5th
4	Permissive parenting	3.22	2nd
5	Neglectful parenting	3.23	1st

Source: Authors' computation

We ranked the values of mean obtained for different styles of parenting. It can be seen in Table 5 that neglectful parenting ranked first, closely followed by permissive parenting. There is slight margin between neglectful parenting and permissive parenting, which showed that these two dominate the attributes of the parents in the sampled area. The autocratic parenting and authoritarian parenting appeared as the third on the ranking scale, which means that they were also prevalent among the parents in the sampled area. The least, on the ranking scale, is the authoritative parenting, which according to Baumrind is the best. This finding is not in tandem with the study conducted by Ebute, Attah and Maisamari (2020) in Abuja. In their study, they discovered that autocratic parenting was prevalent in Abuja. Similarly, the finding contradicted the results obtained by Onwunyili and Obi (2023). Onwunyili and Obi in their study in Kabba – Bunu found authoritarian parenting style to be paramount among the parents. The finding of Aniemeka et al. (2021) in Ogun State tends to toil in line with this study. The prevalent of neglectful parenting in Ogun State has led to high number of students suffering from psychopathological symptoms.

5.0 Conclusion and recommendation

This study has examined the perception of the young adults about the parenting style of their parents in Edo State Senatorial District, drawing data from 288 young adults, selected using purposive sampling. A simple questionnaire was designed to elicit the needed information on the study and descriptive statistics were employed to analyse the data obtained from the survey. The finding of the study showed that neglectful parenting were ranked first as the parenting style used by the parents of the young adult; and closely followed by the permissive parenting. In addition, the finding showed that the fathers exhibited the attribute of neglectful parenting and permissive parenting than the mothers of the sampled young adults. Lastly, the most appropriate parenting style, which is authoritative parenting style was ranked the least by the young adults. This can explain the root causes of youth aided crimes in the Senatorial District. The study therefore recommends that there is need for re-orientation in the Senatorial District and such re-orientation will involve teaching parents about the appropriate parenting style.

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