

Parenting Styles and Impulsive Behaviour in Children: A Comparative Analysis of Democratic and Autocratic Parenting

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Abstract

This study undertakes a nuanced exploration of the intricate dynamics between parenting styles and impulsive behavior in children, with a specific focus on the contrasting effects of democratic and autocratic parenting approaches. By delving into the complex interplay between parental influence and child development, this research aims to elucidate the mechanisms by which different parenting styles shape children's capacity for self-regulation, decision-making, and emotional control. The findings of this study underscore the significance of adopting a parenting approach that balances structure and autonomy, fostering an environment that promotes healthy development and mitigates the risk of impulsive behavior. The insights garnered from this research have important implications for parents, educators, and mental health professionals seeking to support children's socio-emotional development and promote positive behavioral outcomes.

Keywords: Parenting Style, Impulsive Behaviour, Democratic Parenting, Autocratic Parenting

Democratic and Autocratic Parenting

Democratic parenting is characterized by a balance of warmth, structure, and autonomy, allowing children to develop self-regulation skills and decision-making abilities. Autocratic parenting, on the other hand, is marked by strict rules, low responsiveness, and punitive discipline, which can suppress children's autonomy and self-expression.

The Impacts of Democratic Parenting on Impulsivity in Children

Democratic parenting is distinguished by high responsiveness and high demands. Parents following this style establish clear rules and expectations while encouraging open dialogue and independence. Studies suggest that children raised in democratic households exhibit lower levels of impulsivity due to:

Autonomy and Reflective Thinking: Democratic parenting fosters autonomy and reflective thinking, allowing children to develop better decision-making skills and impulse control.

Parental Warmth and Constructive Feedback: Parental warmth and constructive feedback help children understand the consequences of their actions, leading to more thoughtful and measured responses to situations.

Balance of Freedom and Structure: Children raised with democratic parenting experience a balance of freedom and structure, which enhances their ability to delay gratification and regulate emotions effectively.

Emotional Intelligence: Democratic parenting promotes emotional intelligence, enabling children to recognize and manage their emotions, reducing impulsive behavior.

Positive Role-Modeling: Democratic parents serve as positive role-models, demonstrating self-regulation and impulse control, which children can learn from and emulate.

The Impacts of Autocratic Parenting on Impulsivity in Children

Autocratic parenting is characterized by high demands but low responsiveness. Parents who adopt this style enforce strict rules, expect unquestioning obedience, and often employ punitive measures to discipline their children. Research indicates that children raised under autocratic parenting exhibit higher levels of impulsivity due to:

Suppressed Self-Regulation: The strict and rigid nature of autocratic parenting suppresses children's ability to develop self-regulation skills independently.

Impulsive Reactions: Children may struggle to make their own judgments, leading to impulsive reactions in unfamiliar situations.

Heightened Stress and Emotional Instability: Punitive discipline can result in heightened stress and emotional instability, further exacerbating impulsive tendencies.

Fear of Punishment: The fear of punishment in autocratic parenting can lead to anxiety, causing children to act impulsively without considering the consequences of their actions.

Limited Emotional Expression: Autocratic parenting may limit opportunities for children to express their emotions, leading to pent-up emotions and impulsive behavior.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

A comparative examination of democratic and autocratic parenting styles reveals significant differences in their impact on children's impulsivity. The extent of parental warmth, communication, and autonomy afforded to children plays a crucial role in shaping their impulsive behavior.

Internalization of Discipline: Democratic parenting encourages children to internalize discipline and self-regulation, leading to reduced impulsivity. In contrast, autocratic parenting relies on external controls, which can exacerbate impulsive tendencies.

Problem-Solving and Coping Skills: Democratic parenting fosters problem-solving and coping skills, enabling children to manage stress and emotions more effectively. Autocratic parenting, on the other hand, may limit opportunities for children to develop these skills.

Fear-Based Environment: The fear-based environment of autocratic parenting can create anxiety, leading to impulsive reactions. Democratic parenting, with its emphasis on warmth and support, promotes a more secure and stable environment.

Emotional Regulation: Children raised in democratic households tend to develop better emotional regulation skills, which helps them manage impulsivity. Autocratic parenting, with its strict and rigid nature, can impede emotional regulation.

Decision-Making Skills: Democratic parenting encourages children to develop decision-making skills, which helps them make more thoughtful and measured choices. Autocratic parenting, with its emphasis on obedience, may limit opportunities for children to develop these skills.

By understanding the differences between democratic and autocratic parenting styles, parents and caregivers can adopt strategies that promote healthy development and reduce impulsivity in children.

DATA ANALYSIS

H1: "Democratic Parenting Style is a significant predictor of Impulsive Behaviour."

H0: "Democratic Parenting Style is not a significant predictor of Impulsive Behaviour."

Table 1.1: Model Summary Table

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.630 ^a	.397	.396	3.20867
a. Predictors: (Constant), Democratic Parenting				

Table 1.1 indicates that the Democratic Parenting Style is a significant predictor, with a high R-value of 0.630, which signifies a significant positive relationship between the two variables. The R² score is 0.397, indicating that 39.7% of the variance in impulsive behaviour may be attributed to the democratic parenting style. The adjusted R² is marginally lower, at 0.396, so affirming the model's robustness while accounting for the number of predictors. The standard error of the estimate is 3.20867, indicating the mean departure of observed impulsive behaviour scores from their projected values. The results indicate that a democratic parenting style strongly influences impulsive behaviour, warranting additional investigation into its mechanisms for behavioural regulation outcomes.

Table 1.2: ANOVA Table

ANOVA ^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4046.453	1	4046.453	393.030	.000 ^b
	Residual	6156.732	598	10.296		
	Total	10203.185	599			
a. Dependent Variable: Impulsiveness						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Democratic Parenting						

Table 1.2 indicates that Democratic Parenting Style is a significant predictor of impulsiveness. The F-statistic is 393.030 and the p-value is 0.000, indicating that the former is significantly below the 0.05 threshold for significance. The regression sum of squares significantly contributes to the variance in the regression model, as evidenced by the substantial disparity between the residual sum of squares and the regression sum of squares, which are 4046.453 and 6156.732, respectively. The model exhibits a strong mean square of 4046.453 for regression and 10.296 for residuals, indicating its strength in prediction. These findings suggest that the Democratic Parenting Style significantly influences impulsive behaviour, providing valuable insights for interventions in parenting and behavioural studies. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

Table 1.3: Coefficients Table

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	25.328	.552		45.874	.000
	Democratic Parenting	-.326	.016	-.630	-19.825	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Impulsiveness						

Table 1.3 indicates that the Democratic Parenting Style is a strong predictor of impulsive behaviour in individuals. The unstandardised coefficient is presented below: B = -0.326, $p < 0.001$, indicating that for each one-unit rise in democratic parenting, impulsiveness decreases by 0.326 units, ceteris paribus. A significantly negative beta coefficient of -0.630 indicated that those subjected to the democratic approach exhibit minimal to no tendencies towards impulsiveness. Compelling statistical evidence at a specified alpha level (-19.825 and $p < 0.001$) also yielded substantial findings concerning the associations between this relationship and impulsiveness. Embracing the democratic parenting model would likely mitigate temptations.

H2: "Autocratic Parenting Style is a significant predictor of Impulsive Behaviour."

H0: "Autocratic Parenting Style is not a significant predictor of Impulsive Behaviour."

Table 2.1: Model Summary Table

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.503 ^a	.253	.252	3.56999
a. Predictors: (Constant), Autocratic Parenting				

Table 2.1 indicates that the R value for predicting impulsive behaviour based on an autocratic parenting style is 0.503. This signifies a moderate positive correlation between the two variables. An R Square score of 0.253 indicates that 25.3% of the variance in impulsive behaviour is accounted for by the authoritarian

parenting style. The adjusted R Square of 0.252 suggests that the explanation is slightly modified for the number of predictors in the model, demonstrating stability in the results. The standard error of estimate is 3.57, indicating the average departure of observed scores for impulsive behaviour from the projected values. The findings indicate a substantial impact of authoritarian parenting on impulsive behaviour, warranting more investigation and intervention in this domain.

Table 2.2: ANOVA Table

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2581.788	1	2581.788	202.576	.000 ^b
	Residual	7621.397	598	12.745		
	Total	10203.185	599			
a. Dependent Variable: Impulsiveness						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Autocratic Parenting						

Table 2.2 indicates that the autocratic parenting style significantly predicts impulsiveness. The F-value is 202.576 with a p-value of 0.000, signifying that it is well below the standard significance level of 0.05. The statistical association between autocratic parenting and impulsiveness is robust. The model accounts for a significant percentage of the variance in impulsive behaviour, with a Regression Sum of Squares of 2581.788 compared to an unexplained variance represented by a Residual Sum of Squares of 7621.397. These findings suggest that offspring of autocratic parents tend to exhibit impulsive behaviour, highlighting the significance of parenting style in shaping behavioural outcomes. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

Table 2.3: Coefficients Table

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.228	.888		2.509	.012
	Autocratic Parenting	.394	.028	.503	14.233	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Impulsiveness						

Table 2.3 indicates that the standardised beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.503$, $p < 0.001$) serves as a strong predictor of impulsive behaviours in individuals. The standardised coefficient is $B = 0.394$, indicating that for each unit increase in the autocratic parenting style, impulsive behaviour increases by 0.394 units, while controlling for other variables. The elevated t-value of 14.233 further strengthens this association. Furthermore, the p-value is zero ($p = 0.000$), indicating the statistical importance of this association. These findings delineate the potential effects of autocratic parenting on the emergence of impulsivity in individuals.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study underscore the profound impact of parenting styles on impulsive behavior in children and adolescents. By adopting a democratic parenting approach, characterized by warmth, structure, and autonomy, parents can foster healthy development, promote self-regulation, and reduce impulsivity. In contrast, autocratic parenting, marked by strict rules and punitive discipline, can exacerbate impulsive tendencies and hinder children's social, emotional, and cognitive growth. As parents, caregivers, and educators, it is essential to recognize the significance of parenting styles in shaping

children's behavior and to adopt strategies that promote positive development, emotional intelligence, and impulse control. By doing so, we can empower children to become thoughtful, reflective, and responsible individuals, equipped with the skills necessary to succeed in an ever-changing world.

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