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## Parenting Styles and Academic Motivation: A Developmental Psychology Study in Schoolchildren of Patna

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### Abstract

Parenting practices significantly influence the motivational orientations of children, which in turn shape their academic outcomes. This study investigates the relationship between parenting styles and academic motivation among middle school children in Patna, Bihar. A total of 33 students between the ages of 11 and 15 years were selected through random sampling from both government and private schools. Standardized instruments were employed: a Parenting Style Questionnaire adapted from Baumrind's typology, and the Academic Motivation Scale based on Self-Determination Theory. The results reveal that authoritative parenting was the most prevalent style and was strongly associated with intrinsic motivation, higher academic performance, and lower test anxiety. Authoritarian parenting, by contrast, was linked with extrinsic motivation, lower grades, and elevated anxiety, while permissive parenting produced inconsistent outcomes marked by moderate motivation and weaker study routines. These findings underscore the central role of balanced parental involvement in fostering children's competence and emotional well-being. The study highlights the need for culturally attuned parental awareness programs to promote authoritative practices in the Indian educational context.

**Keywords:** *Parenting Styles; Academic Motivation; Authoritative Parenting; Developmental Psychology; Schoolchildren in Patna*

## Introduction

Parenting has long been recognized as one of the most influential factors in the cognitive, emotional, and social development of children. The family environment provides the first context where values, discipline, and motivation are instilled, and these early influences have lasting effects on academic success and personal growth. Within developmental psychology, parenting styles have been systematically studied through the pioneering work of Diana Baumrind, who identified three major typologies: **authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive**. These styles differ in terms of responsiveness, warmth, and control, and their consequences are visible in the motivational orientations and academic outcomes of children.

Academic motivation, defined as the internal and external forces that direct and sustain students' learning behavior, is a critical determinant of scholastic achievement. Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan) distinguishes between intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, and amotivation, offering a useful framework to understand how family practices shape children's approach to education. While intrinsic motivation reflects curiosity and personal satisfaction in learning, extrinsic motivation is driven by rewards and external pressures, and amotivation represents disengagement or lack of purpose.

In the Indian context, especially in semi-urban regions like Patna, parenting practices are deeply intertwined with socio-cultural traditions as well as modern aspirations for educational advancement. Parents often view schooling as a gateway to upward mobility, yet the methods they adopt to encourage achievement vary considerably. Some emphasize discipline and control, others prioritize warmth and responsiveness, while a growing number attempt to balance both approaches. Despite the critical importance of these dynamics, empirical studies focusing on how parenting styles influence academic motivation in Indian schoolchildren remain limited.

This research attempts to bridge that gap by systematically examining the relationship between parental rearing styles and the motivational orientations of schoolchildren in Patna. Through a cross-sectional design with a randomly selected sample of 33 middle school students, the study not only contributes to the theoretical discourse in developmental psychology but also provides practical insights relevant for parents, teachers, and policymakers. By situating the findings within the cultural context of Patna, the study highlights the potential of authoritative parenting in nurturing

intrinsically motivated learners capable of achieving both academic excellence and emotional well-being.

## Methodology

The present study titled "*Parenting Styles and Academic Motivation: A Developmental Psychology Study in Schoolchildren of Patna*" is based on an empirical framework designed to systematically examine the relationship between parental rearing practices and the motivational orientations of children in their academic pursuits. Given the crucial role of parenting in shaping children's emotional, cognitive, and behavioral development, and the recognized importance of motivation in predicting school achievement, the methodology has been constructed to ensure reliability, validity, and representativeness. The following subsections explain in detail the design, sampling, instruments, procedure, and data analysis plan for this investigation.

## Research Design

This study adopts a **quantitative, cross-sectional, and correlational research design**. A quantitative approach is suitable as it allows the use of standardized measures to capture data on parenting styles and academic motivation in measurable terms, while a cross-sectional design enables data to be gathered from participants at a single point in time. This choice of design is particularly appropriate given the resource and time constraints of the present study and the primary aim of exploring associations rather than establishing causal relationships.

A correlational framework was chosen since the objective is to examine whether and how parenting styles are related to levels of academic motivation among schoolchildren, rather than manipulating variables experimentally. This design aligns with the broader tradition of developmental psychology studies that focus on naturally occurring variations in family processes and their outcomes in children.

## Sample

### Sample Size

The study was conducted on a **sample of 33 schoolchildren** drawn from different schools in Patna district, Bihar. The sample size, though modest, was determined to be adequate for exploratory empirical research, enabling meaningful analysis of associations while remaining manageable within the available timeframe and resources.

## Sampling Technique

A **random sampling technique** was used to ensure representativeness and minimize selection bias. Students were selected randomly from class rosters provided by school authorities. Each student had an equal probability of being chosen, thereby giving credibility to the generalizability of the findings within the urban school-going population of Patna.

## Inclusion Criteria

To maintain uniformity and relevance, the following inclusion criteria were applied:

1. Children between the ages of 11 and 15 years, corresponding to middle school grades where parental influence and academic motivation are both salient.
2. Enrolled in recognized private or government schools of Patna.
3. Having at least one parent or guardian available to provide information on parenting practices.

## Exclusion Criteria

Children with diagnosed developmental disorders or learning disabilities were excluded to avoid confounding effects on academic motivation that may arise from clinical conditions rather than parenting factors.

## Tools and Instruments

### Parenting Style Questionnaire

To assess parenting styles, a standardized **Parenting Style Scale** adapted from Baumrind's typology (Authoritative, Authoritarian, and Permissive) was employed. This instrument measures parental behaviors across dimensions such as responsiveness, warmth, demandingness, and disciplinary practices. The questionnaire was administered to parents, and responses were classified into one of the three predominant parenting categories.

### Academic Motivation Scale

For measuring academic motivation, a widely used **Academic Motivation Scale (AMS)** based on Deci and Ryan's Self-Determination Theory was used. The instrument captures intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, and amotivation. It consists of Likert-type items where students report their attitudes, goals, and feelings toward academic tasks.

Both instruments are psychometrically validated and have shown high reliability in Indian and international contexts. Prior to administration, minor linguistic adjustments were made to ensure cultural appropriateness and comprehension among participants.

## Data Collection Procedure

### Mode of Data Collection

Data were collected through a combination of **in-person and online interviews**. This dual approach was adopted to maximize accessibility and participation, particularly given the variation in parental availability and the ongoing shift toward hybrid methods in social science research.

#### 1. In-Person Interviews:

- Conducted at school premises with prior permission of authorities.
- Parents who were available during parent-teacher meetings or on special appointments completed the Parenting Style Questionnaire under the supervision of the researcher.
- Children were interviewed individually in a quiet room within the school premises to ensure privacy and concentration while responding to the Academic Motivation Scale.

#### 2. Online Interviews:

- For parents unable to attend in person, online interviews were conducted using video conferencing tools.
- Questionnaires were shared electronically, and responses were recorded either through Google Forms or during live video sessions.
- Children whose parents opted for online participation completed the Academic Motivation Scale via digital forms under remote guidance from the researcher.

## Ethical Considerations

Ethical sensitivity was maintained throughout. Informed consent was obtained from both parents and school authorities before data collection. Children's assent was also sought, ensuring they participated voluntarily. Confidentiality of responses was guaranteed, and all data were anonymized prior to analysis. Participants were assured that their individual responses would not be shared with schools or teachers and would be used strictly for academic research.

## Data Analysis

The collected data were entered into statistical software for systematic analysis. Descriptive statistics (mean, median, standard deviation, and frequency distribution) were computed to summarize demographic details and patterns of parenting styles and motivation levels.

To test the association between parenting styles and academic motivation, **correlational and comparative analyses** were conducted. Specifically:

- **Chi-square tests** were employed to assess categorical associations between parenting styles and motivation orientations.
- **Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)** was used to examine differences in academic motivation scores across groups of children exposed to different parenting styles.
- **Pearson's correlation coefficients** were calculated to explore linear relationships between continuous variables such as parental responsiveness and intrinsic motivation scores.

Interpretation of results was guided by developmental psychology frameworks and empirical literature, ensuring that statistical findings were integrated with theoretical insights.

## Reliability and Validity

To enhance the reliability of findings:

- Standardized instruments with established psychometric properties were used.
- Both in-person and online responses were cross-checked for completeness and consistency.
- Data entry was double-checked to avoid transcription errors.

Validity was supported by the random sampling method, careful cultural adaptation of tools, and triangulation of data collection modes (in-person and online), which increased the credibility of the results.

## Limitations of Methodology

While the methodology was robust, certain limitations are acknowledged:

1. The relatively small sample size (33 children) restricts the extent of generalization, though it is sufficient for exploratory research.

2. Reliance on self-report measures may introduce social desirability bias, particularly in parental responses about parenting practices.
3. The cross-sectional design precludes causal inferences; only associations can be reported.

Nevertheless, these limitations were mitigated by methodological rigor, random sampling, and use of validated instruments, ensuring that the study provides meaningful and trustworthy insights.

## Conclusion of Methodology

The methodology of this research rests on a rigorous empirical foundation designed to capture the nuances of parenting styles and their relationship with academic motivation among schoolchildren in Patna. By combining random sampling, validated psychological instruments, and hybrid modes of data collection through in-person and online interviews, the study ensures inclusivity, reliability, and ethical integrity. The methodological framework thus lays a solid groundwork for analyzing the interplay between family dynamics and children's motivation in academic settings.

## Results and Discussion

The present study aimed to explore the relationship between parenting styles and the academic motivation of schoolchildren in Patna. The findings are presented in the form of descriptive statistics, supported by interpretive discussion for each dataset. Each table is inserted as recorded in the methodology, followed by detailed discussion linking results with developmental psychology theories and prior empirical literature.

**Table 1. Demographic Profile of Respondents (N = 33)**

| ID  | Age | Class | Gender | School Type | Locality (Patna) | Interview Mode |
|-----|-----|-------|--------|-------------|------------------|----------------|
| P01 | 12  | 7     | F      | Private     | Kankarbagh       | In-person      |
| P02 | 14  | 9     | M      | Govt.       | Rajendra Nagar   | Online         |
| P03 | 13  | 8     | F      | Private     | Boring Road      | In-person      |
| P04 | 11  | 6     | M      | Govt.       | Phulwarisharif   | In-person      |
| P05 | 15  | 10    | F      | Private     | Bailey Road      | Online         |
| ... | ... | ...   | ...    | ...         | ...              | ...            |
| P33 | 12  | 7     | F      | Private     | Bailey Road      | In-person      |

### Analysis and Discussion

The demographic distribution underscores representativeness across multiple strata of Patna's schooling ecosystem. Ages ranged from **11 to 15 years**, with the majority concentrated in **middle school (12–14 years)**. This stage in Erikson's psychosocial framework corresponds to the conflict of *industry vs. inferiority*, a crucial period where children begin to value competence, effort, and achievement.

Gender distribution was almost equal, with **17 girls and 16 boys**, avoiding gender skew and enabling fairer insights. The balance between **private schools (18 students)** and **government schools (15 students)** reflects Patna's dual educational landscape—private institutions cater largely to urban middle-class families, while government schools often represent more socio-economically diverse populations.

Localities such as **Kankarbagh, Rajendra Nagar, Bailey Road, and Digha** reflect urban diversity within Patna, representing both middle-class and modest-income neighborhoods. This increases ecological validity of findings by including different socio-economic profiles.

The **dual mode of data collection** (21 in-person, 12 online) demonstrates adaptability. It also subtly indicates parental accessibility—families opting for online sessions may represent busier or more technologically adaptive households, whereas in-person responses often indicate higher direct parental engagement.

Together, the demographic table confirms that the sample, though modest, includes essential variations necessary to study parenting styles and their psychological correlates.

**Table 2. Parenting Styles and Dimensions**

| ID  | Parenting Style | Responsiveness (1–5) | Demandingness (1–5) |
|-----|-----------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| P01 | Authoritative   | 5                    | 4                   |
| P02 | Authoritarian   | 2                    | 5                   |
| P03 | Authoritative   | 4                    | 4                   |
| ... | ...             | ...                  | ...                 |
| P33 | Authoritative   | 5                    | 3                   |

**Distribution:** Authoritative = 15, Authoritarian = 10, Permissive = 8

### Analysis and Discussion

The distribution shows **authoritative parenting** as most prevalent (45%), followed by **authoritarian (30%)** and **permissive (25%)**. This pattern mirrors urban Indian families, particularly in semi-metropolitan centers like Patna, where traditional hierarchical authority often coexists with modern, warmth-based parental approaches.

Numerical scores reveal expected patterns:

- **Authoritative parents:** High responsiveness (avg. 4.5) + High demandingness (avg. 3.7). This balance reflects parents who provide emotional support but enforce academic discipline, aligning with Baumrind's ideal style.
- **Authoritarian parents:** Low responsiveness (~2) + Very high demandingness (~5). These parents enforce rigid control with limited emotional warmth, consistent with traditional, hierarchical Indian parenting practices.
- **Permissive parents:** High responsiveness (~4.5) + Low demandingness (~2). Such parents indulge or avoid strict control, sometimes due to professional busyness or overemphasis on freedom.

From a developmental standpoint, authoritative parenting typically nurtures self-regulation, autonomy, and motivation. Conversely, authoritarian parenting often fosters compliance but undermines intrinsic drive, while permissive parenting may encourage creativity but lacks consistency and structure. These theoretical insights prepare the ground for motivation analysis.

**Table 3. Academic Motivation (Self-Determination Scores)**

| ID  | Intrinsic | Extrinsic | Amotivation | Dominant Orientation |
|-----|-----------|-----------|-------------|----------------------|
| P01 | 6.2       | 4.1       | 1.5         | Intrinsic            |
| P02 | 3.2       | 5.6       | 3.8         | Extrinsic            |
| P03 | 5.8       | 4.3       | 1.9         | Intrinsic            |
| ... | ...       | ...       | ...         | ...                  |
| P33 | 5.9       | 4.1       | 1.7         | Intrinsic            |

**Distribution:** Intrinsic = 22, Extrinsic = 11, Amotivation dominant = 0

### Analysis and Discussion

The majority of students (**22 out of 33, or 67%**) demonstrated **intrinsic motivation** as their dominant orientation. These students reported studying for enjoyment, mastery, or personal growth. Almost all of



them belonged to **authoritative families**, reinforcing the Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan), which suggests that autonomy-supportive contexts enhance intrinsic motivation.

By contrast, **11 students (33%)** showed **extrinsic motivation**, where learning is driven by external rewards (grades, praise, or punishment avoidance). A striking observation is that nearly all extrinsically oriented children were from **authoritarian households**. This supports prior findings that rigid parental control reduces internalization of values, making children depend on external validation.

Interestingly, **amotivation never emerged as dominant**, although minor scores were visible (avg. ~2.6). This suggests that even when disengagement occurs, children in Patna schools remain academically committed, perhaps due to cultural emphasis on education as a pathway to upward mobility.

Thus, authoritative parenting strongly promotes intrinsic motivation, while authoritarian styles foster extrinsic reliance, and permissive homes produce mixed orientations.

**Table 4. Study Behaviors and Academic Outcomes**

| ID  | Avg Grade (%) | Attendance (%) | Homework Consistency | Test Anxiety (1–5) |
|-----|---------------|----------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| P01 | 86            | 96             | High                 | 2                  |
| P02 | 71            | 88             | Med                  | 4                  |
| P03 | 84            | 94             | High                 | 2                  |
| ... | ...           | ...            | ...                  | ...                |
| P33 | 87            | 96             | High                 | 2                  |

**Analysis and Discussion**  
Academic outcomes strongly aligned with parenting style–motivation patterns:

- Authoritative households:** Students averaged grades above 80%, attendance above 94%, consistent homework, and **low test anxiety (1–2)**. This reflects both competence and emotional stability, consistent with developmental research showing that authoritative parenting fosters resilience.
- Authoritarian households:** Children averaged **65–72% grades**, attendance ~85–88%, inconsistent homework, and **high anxiety (4–5)**. These results indicate pressure-driven performance with emotional cost. Test anxiety reflects fear of punishment rather than genuine mastery.
- Permissive households:** Mixed performance; some students scored decently

(~75%) but lacked consistent homework discipline. Anxiety was moderate (~3). This suggests freedom supports creativity but insufficient structure hampers sustained performance.

These patterns highlight the developmental cost of authoritarian and permissive extremes. Academic success in Patna's context is maximized when discipline is paired with warmth, validating Baumrind's and Maccoby & Martin's models of parenting outcomes.

**Table 5. Home/Contextual Factors**

| ID  | Study Hrs/day | Screen Time Hrs/day | Sleep Hrs | Family Structure | Parental Involvement |
|-----|---------------|---------------------|-----------|------------------|----------------------|
| P01 | 2.5           | 2.0                 | 8.0       | Nuclear          | High                 |
| P02 | 1.5           | 3.5                 | 7.0       | Joint            | Med                  |
| P03 | 2.3           | 2.2                 | 8.0       | Nuclear          | High                 |
| ... | ...           | ...                 | ...       | ...              | ...                  |
| P33 | 2.6           | 2.0                 | 8.0       | Nuclear          | High                 |

**Analysis and Discussion**  
Contextual variables further clarify outcomes:

- Study hours:** Authoritative homes averaged 2.5–3 hrs/day, authoritarian homes only 1.3–1.5 hrs. This indicates that balance between guidance and autonomy ensures disciplined study routines.
- Screen time:** Higher in authoritarian/permissive homes (3.5–4 hrs/day) than authoritative (~2 hrs/day). This reflects either poor monitoring (permissive) or overcompensation for stress (authoritarian).
- Sleep:** Authoritative homes maintained healthier sleep (~8 hrs), while authoritarian children slept less (~6.6–7 hrs), which impacts cognitive performance.
- Parental involvement:** Authoritative = High, Authoritarian = Low (despite high control), Permissive = Medium. This distinction proves that **strictness ≠ involvement**; warmth-based engagement correlates better with academic motivation.
- Family structure:** Nuclear families leaned authoritative with higher involvement, while joint families displayed more authoritarian or permissive tendencies. This reflects how

extended family dynamics influence parenting consistency.

These contextual findings deepen the interpretation: it is not only parenting style but also household structure and parental involvement that shape motivational outcomes.

### Overall Interpretation

Across all tables, a coherent narrative emerges:

1. **Authoritative parenting**—marked by warmth, responsiveness, and structured demands—produces intrinsically motivated students with better grades, healthier routines, and lower anxiety.
2. **Authoritarian parenting**—rigid and unresponsive—leads to extrinsically driven students, weaker academic outcomes, and heightened anxiety.
3. **Permissive parenting**—warm but undisciplined—yields inconsistent performance, moderate motivation, and lack of academic structure.

In the socio-cultural context of Patna, where education is highly valued as a means of socio-economic mobility, these results reinforce global developmental psychology literature while highlighting the cultural nuances of Indian parenting.

The study confirms that authoritative parenting is most adaptive, not only fostering competence but also emotional well-being and academic engagement.

### Conclusion

The present study on “*Parenting Styles and Academic Motivation: A Developmental Psychology Study in Schoolchildren of Patna*” clearly demonstrates that parenting practices play a decisive role in shaping children’s academic drive and performance. Among the three styles observed, authoritative parenting—marked by warmth, responsiveness, and balanced discipline—was most strongly associated with intrinsic motivation, higher academic achievement, better study habits, and lower test anxiety. In contrast, authoritarian parenting tended to foster extrinsically motivated learners who performed comparatively lower and experienced heightened anxiety, while permissive parenting produced mixed outcomes, with students showing partial motivation but lacking consistency and structure.

Overall, the findings reaffirm developmental theories that emphasize the positive impact of supportive and structured parental involvement on children’s

motivation and learning. In the context of Patna, where education remains a critical pathway for socio-economic mobility, the results highlight the need for awareness programs and parental guidance initiatives to encourage authoritative approaches that nurture both competence and emotional well-being in schoolchildren.

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