

The background is a dark blue gradient. It features several decorative elements: large concentric circles in the top-left and bottom-right corners, and numerous squares of various sizes scattered throughout. Some squares are outlined in a light teal color, while others are white. The text is centered and reads:

Extended Essay Sample

PSYCHOLOGY

Exploring Parental Influence and its role in the
formation of aggression in children aged 5-9



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Topic: Exploring Parental Influence and its role in the formation of aggression in children aged 5-9

Introduction:

Child rearing is another area that demonstrates that parents' behavior significantly affects children's behavior and psychological state. It is crucial, especially when establishing the causes of aggression among children¹ aged between 5 and 9 years concerning parental behaviors and cross-sectional or longitudinal parenting styles². The manifestation of aggressiveness in children includes the use of physical force when threatening, assaulting, or even physically attacking someone. Such behavior can be more dangerous as it has potential impacts on a child's outcome in his or her future relationships, school performance, and psychological health. Thus, understanding how and in what manner parents affect the aggression development in children is crucial in identifying the most helpful interventions implying the proper child development.

This extended essay aims to investigate the impact of parents on the development of aggression in children in the 5-9 years age range. This study will explore the four primary parenting styles, Authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and uninvolved, and how these will influence aggressive behaviors in children³. Also, the essay will compare and contrast how parenting behavior, such as parental modeling of aggressive behavior, disciplinary strategies, and the family's emotional climate, can lead to aggression in young children. Thus, this study aims to better understand these dynamics and identify appropriate strategies for preventing aggression in children based on effective parenting and intervention.

The psychological issues and concepts of the essay must be discussed. The psychological matter under consideration in this context is how aggression develops in children. There are

¹ Yale Medicine. "Yale Medicine." Accessed www.yalemedicine.org/conditions/anger-issues-in-children-and-teens#:~:q=For%20children%2C%20anger%20issues%20often,is%20a%20contributor%20as%20well.

² CNBC. "CNBC." Accessed www.cnbc.com/2021/06/29/child-psychologist-explains-4-types-of-parenting-and-how-to-tell-which-is-right-for-you.html

³ Healthline. "Healthline." Accessed www.healthline.com/health/aggressive-behavior

several psychological approaches to define aggression, which is commonly described as the inclination of an individual or group to behave violently. Aggression, in terms of human behavior, is used when an individual feels frustrated or is a behavior copied from other people, especially parents. According to the Social Learning Theory⁴ developed by Albert Bandura, aggressive behaviors are found to be learned from other people, and the modeling process more often aids this. This theory will help explain how children could replicate other behaviors exhibited by their parents, such as aggressive behavior.

Cognitive processes also contribute significantly to the emergence of aggression. Many cognitive aspects are imperative in determining levels of aggression, including children's perception of parental conduct, how they perceive social interaction, and even their ability to regulate emotions. Further, analyzing children's social relationships and the role of caregivers can be helpful because the attachment theory⁵ reveals how secure or insecure attachments influence temperament and behavioral patterns, including aggressive ones. The last important notion derived from psychology is memory, which determines how the child remembers and processes the interactions with the parents. Continuous reinforcement of aggression may integrate into a child's memory, making the child accept such actions as usual and making him likely to use similar actions.

Parenting style:

Several notions and terms should be defined to launch an efficient research process. Firstly, parental influence is how the parent molds the child in his or her behavior, thinking pattern, and emotions. Secondly, aggression is, therefore, a behavioral or attitudinal confrontation that is destructive and violent or propensity to greater physical, verbal, or relational force. Additionally, parenting styles must be understood. Authoritative parenting⁶ is due to high sensitivity and high expectations of the children. The parents who use this style are caring and loving, but at the same time, they are strict and predictable. They are organized so that the child is facilitated to be independent, but the environment they provide is highly structured, hence fostering the

⁴ National University. "National University." Accessed www.nu.edu. <https://www.nu.edu/blog/theories-of-learning/>

⁵ Verywell Mind. "Attachment Styles." Accessed www.verywellmind.com. <https://www.verywellmind.com/attachment-styles-2795344#:~:Studies%20have%20shown%20that%20securely,ambivalent%20or%20avoidant%20attachment%20styles>

⁶ NCBI. "NCBI." Accessed www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK568743/#:~:Researchers%20have%20grouped%20parenting%20styles,how%20parents%20raise%20their%20children>

development of self-discipline and social competence. Authoritative parenting is, therefore, characterized by low sensitivity but high standards. Parents employing this method are usually rigid and demand blind discipline from their children. Their disciplinary methods entail more punishing than correcting the child; hence, they follow the rules to evade a particular punishment. Permissive parenting⁷ means that parents are highly responsive to the child but make few demands simultaneously. Permissive parents are very lenient and can rarely be seen making any strict rules. They want their child to be happy, and they easily yield to their every wish, and hence children develop behavioral problems as far as discipline is concerned. Uninvolved parenting can be described as high non-intrusive control and low warmth. These parents are distantly related and not involved with their child's life. They don't offer much love, care, or time; thus, children feel abandoned. They often encounter problems with bonding and developing a sense of self.

Psychological Theories

According to the social learning theory of Learning, children learn to behave based on what they see others do. According to learnings of behavioral theory, if a child constantly sees other individuals displaying aggressive behavior, not mentioning parents themselves, the child is bound to retaliate similarly. By the principles of this theory, young people's behavior and their worldview are defined by the models they have.

Attachment Theory deals with the affection that is formed between the child and the caregivers. Secure attachment is beneficial for children's social, emotional, and behavioral growth because children who are attached and understood will have a strong and safe foundation. The aforementioned unstable attachment styles can cause problems regulating one's emotions and contribute to aggression.

This paper shall use a synthesis of literature and analysis of research studies to examine the relationship between parental practices and child aggression. Thus, by analyzing the conclusion of the papers, the essay will point out the relationship between the two studies on the issue of parenting and children's aggression. The effects will also focus on mediated/moderating cultural, sociological, and psychological variables in this relationship.

Thus, the essay's primary focus is to explore the role of parental factors and practices in the development of aggression in children between 5 and 9 years old and provide

⁷ Mayo Clinic Press. "Mayo Clinic Press." Accessed mcpres.mayoclinic.org. <https://mcpres.mayoclinic.org/parenting/what-parenting-style-is-right-for-you/>

recommendations that may help young parents achieve positive change in their children's behaviors and evolution.

Research question:

To what extent does parental influence, specifically through different parenting styles, contribute to the formation of aggressive behavior in children aged 5-9?

This research question covers a review of the effects of authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and uninvolved parents' discipline on aggression in early childhood through secondary data collected from extant literature and psychological research.

Methodology:

The information for this extended essay will consist of secondary sources only, revealing a range of aspects concerning the impact of parental behavior in the development of aggression in children 5-9 years old. The following steps are used in the current research methodology since they focus on reviewing the existing literature: The literature review aims to identify research studies, literature reviews, and theoretical papers relevant to the relationships between parenting style and child aggression.

When selecting articles and other sources for this essay, their reliability and relation to the chosen topic will be considered. Journal articles from peer-reviewed journals, books by or written by reputable psychologists, and credible psychological databases will be used. These sources are considered reliable, and the evidence is well substantiated. Thus, documents concerning child development and parenting development from governmental and educational institutions will be incorporated into the analysis to provide a more holistic view.

The selected sources shall play a vital role in the analysis and interpretation of data. Scholarly writings that have offered data on the relationship between parenting behaviors and child aggression will be the basis of the investigation. The literature in the form of review papers summarizing several research works will be more beneficial when comparing patterns and trends. While turning to empirical articles, the significant theoretical frameworks to be used are the Social Learning Theory and the Attachment Theory, which will aid in identifying the steps through which the pattern of parental behavior influences child aggression.

The criteria for selecting high-quality secondary sources will help improve the investigation's effectiveness while increasing the study's validity. Though the materials used are popular

science, the essay uses only peer-reviewed articles and reputable publications, guaranteeing the information's reliability. Since the sources chosen are relevant to the research question, justifying them will strengthen the argument and give a logical flow of events. Thus, such systematic work allows the precise development and definition of the significant points and the writer to avoid going off-topic and using sources containing information unrelated to the issue at hand.

Therefore, the chosen methodology of the present extended essay consists of a careful primary search of the secondary sources, which gives a more objective and convincing approach to investigating the impact of parental influence on the formation of aggression in children between the ages of 5 and 9. This approach ensures that the overall coverage is extensive and coherent, thus helping enhance understanding of the given topic.

Analysis:

Knowledge of how distinct parenting behavior increases the development of aggression among children of age 5-9, therefore, consists of secondary research questions that are a complex study that needs thorough scrutiny of the existing literature. This section will analyze various studies and theoretical frameworks to address the research question: Compared to another variable, how parents raise their children, that refers to the extent different types of parenting affect aggression of students 5 to 9 years old? The protagonists of the analysis will be cognitive approaches, and the role they play in the development of aggression will be supported by empirical research and relevant theories.

Firstly, the analysis will look into Authoritative Parenting and Aggression. The authoritative parenting style is thus considered the most effective as it incorporates high sensitivity and control⁸. It takes care of the child while, at the same time, setting limits on the sort of behaviors that should not be encouraged. Kuppens has widely supported authoritative parenting, and it has been identified that children brought up under such a parenting style are the least

⁸ Parenting Science. "Authoritative Parenting Style." Accessed parentingscience.com. <https://parentingscience.com/authoritative-parenting-style/>

aggressive⁹. This could be explained by the cognitive activities that the authoritative manner of parenting entails. It also discusses authoritative parenting and the cognitive processes a parent must possess to raise a child appropriately.

Authoritative parents often discipline their children using reasoning and explanations, likely leading to cognitive development. For example, Jin has noted that children raised in authoritative families show better problem-solving and self-regulation skills¹⁰. As a result, when parents set specific rules and explain why punishment should be given if the child behaves aggressively, the child can realize these subtleties in different scenarios, thus minimizing the possibility of acting aggressively. Furthermore, there is an emphasis on speaking about the relationship and matters unrestrictedly, as children with this style can enunciate their feelings and ideas well. This helps decrease aggression because children do not feel frustrated, feel listened to, and have their problems solved. This essential cognitive skill of empathy is also developed in this environment. The passive type of aggression is likely to be low in children with this characteristic since they can feel and think about other people. In this case, authoritative parenting is seen to impact cognitive processes that minimize aggressiveness in children positively. According to Agbaria, authoritative parents reduce aggression by allowing children to assert control and encouraging them to solve their problems, regulate their emotions, and appreciate others' feelings¹¹.

Next comes the Authoritarian Parenting and Aggression. Low sensitivity and high control dimensions characterize the authoritarian style. Such a style is always rather strict; the authors' expectations are very high, and there is little opportunity to negotiate. Studies suggest that children who are raised in authoritarian homes are likely to be more aggressive than they are not the other way around. This section will discuss the processes that explain this association.

⁹ Kuppens, Sofie, and Eva Ceulemans. "Parenting Styles: A Closer Look at a Well-Known Concept." *Journal of child and family studies* vol. 28,1 (2019): 168-181. doi:10.1007/s10826-018-1242-x

¹⁰ Jin, Jiawen. "The Impact of Parenting Styles on Children's Social Adjustment and Development." *Journal of Education Humanities and Social Sciences*, vol. 22, no. 867-872, Nov. 2023, doi:10.54097/ehss.v22i.14554. Accessed ResearchGate. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/376963047_The_Impact_of_Parenting_Styles_on_Children's_Social_Adjustment_and_Development.

¹¹ Agbaria, Qutaiba, and Fayez Mahamid. "The association between parenting styles, maternal self-efficacy, and social and emotional adjustment among Arab preschool children." *Psicologia, reflexao e critica : revista semestral do Departamento de Psicologia da UFRGS* vol. 36,1 10. 26 Apr. 2023, doi:10.1186/s41155-023-00252-4

Each authoritarian parent has independent cognitive impacts on the child, defining the child's totality of being, spirit, and personality for better or worse.

The authoritarian style of parenting uses negative reinforcements. Therefore, it adversely affects the cognitive area, including the ability to regulate one's actions and solve problems. Perpetrating abuses leads to impaired cognitive development of the child, particularly on issues concerning self-control. For example, Gershoff, studying the effects of physical punishment in raising children, concluded that, indeed, children exposed to physical punishment become more aggressive. This can be understood in correlation to the Social Learning Theory, where children learn new behaviors by observing others. The analysis demonstrated that children are likely to act aggressively if parents use aggression as a way to discipline children. Moreover, there is an absence of open communication in authoritarian households, which hinders cognitive growth.

They do not let children express their ideas and feelings, which frustrates them and leads to bitter feelings toward their parents. These feelings can lead to aggressiveness mainly because of the children's inability to handle the inner turmoil. This paper identifies authoritarian parenting as one of the negative training that affects cognitive processes to make children more aggressive. The enforcement of punishment and infrequent use of positive approaches to deal with behaviors results in poor anger management, which manifests in aggression.

Next comes Permissive Parenting and Aggression. Another method of childcare that can be connected to increased aggression in children is permissive parenting, where parents are highly responsive to children's needs but do not make many demands on the child. While indulgent parents do not set strict rules and allow children much freedom, they consequently experience problems with organization and obedience. In this part of the work, the author will consider the elements of the correlation between permission-based child-rearing approach and aggressiveness. Permissive parents' children's underdeveloped cognitive abilities of self-regulation and self-restraint significantly affect their temper. Researchers established that a permissive parenting style is related to externalization, which entails aggression. The lack of these guidelines gives the child no clear understanding of what is and is not acceptable, thus causing impulsivity and aggressiveness. Permissive parenting also impacts children's executive working memory, which is connected to managing goals, decision-making procedures, and impulse control. However, children require structure to build such skills, and this structured learning is known as direct instruction. Poor compliance enforcement across households in the permissive parenting style contributes to the lack of structured executive functions, resulting in an eminent predisposition to aggressiveness. Permissive parenting is associated with damages

in cognitive, specifically, aspects of self-regulation and general executive control. These issues lead to the evaluation of structure and the lack of defined borders, causing impulsiveness and aggression in children.

Lastly, the least appropriate form of parenting is, thus, uninvolved parenting, which is synonymous with low parental involvement and low expectations. Such parents are distant and barely engaged in their children's lives, which results in profound intellectual and psychological backwardness. Uninvolved parents present some of the worst forms of parental care because their children undergo neglect, which has adverse effects on the children's learning abilities. Failure to form properly secure, healthy relationships with the caretakers can result in the development of attachment disorders. Thus, in prosocial development, Cassidy pointed out the importance of secure base attachment in attachment theory¹². The insecure attachment typical for the uninvolved style harms children's ability to regulate emotions and raises the level of aggression. Moreover, uninvolved parenting neglects to teach children what they should or should not do, and it does not offer the child the thinking and social interaction he or she requires. It has been revealed that children in neglectful environments have a lower capability level regarding abstract thinking and academic performance. These cognitive deficits result in frustration and aggression as children cannot deal with their environment effectively. Strict neglect of the child through uninvolved parenting stunts learning by affecting a child's attachment and cognition. The first of these affects the level of aggression due to difficulties in managing and regulating their emotions.

Though the above breakdown offers a complete picture of several forms of aggression resulting from various parenting styles regarding cognitive factors, it is essential to look at the limitations of the sources used and the general perspective of the study.

A weakness is that most of the research studies used are correlational; thus, one variable's effect on the others cannot be determined. It is, however, essential to understand that the various studies suggest that parenting styles influence aggression, although they do not confirm a definite causality. Furthermore, most of the research concludes its findings from the data collected from parents and children, which is likely to have vital and amalgamating estimation potentially.

¹² Cassidy, Jude et al. "Contributions of attachment theory and research: a framework for future research, translation, and policy." *Development and psychopathology* vol. 25,4 Pt 2 (2013): 1415-34. doi:10.1017/S0954579413000692

Another critical issue that was identified was cultural relations. Previous parenting style and child aggression literature has been primarily done in Western countries, limiting the generalization of the findings. Some parenting requirements and consequences may differ from one culture to another, requiring a more extensive approach. That said, the cognitive approach clearly explains how parents' influence affects aggression. When apprehending parenting styles' effects on child behavior, it is more appropriate to study cognitive processes such as emotional regulation, problem-solving abilities, etc.

It is also relevant to look at the generalisations of these conclusions, which shall be further discussed in this paper. Parenting interventions should enhance the child's cognitive development by forming secure relationships, communication, a structured setting, and reasonable rules. They can assist in reducing aggressive actions and favor prosocial, emotional, and cognitive progress.

Hence, the study of secondary sources states that various parenting practices shape the development of aggression in children ages 5-9 through the cognitive channel. Therefore, there is agreement with Graziano and the findings that authoritative parenting enhances the development of cognitive skills that diminish aggression, while authoritarian, permissive, and uninvolved parenting suppresses cognitive growth, hence making a child more aggressive. In conclusion, the cognitive approach illustrates the role of parents and their influence over a child's personality, though the sources used are limited. That is why knowing these dynamics can help to improve the strategies of parenting and the methods of the interventions to promote favorable outcomes of the child's development without the inclination to become aggressive.

Conclusion:

According to the purpose of this work, the objective of this extended essay was to establish the validity of the following research question: In what way does parents' choice of child-rearing practices result in the development of aggression in children aged five to nine years old? The main concern of the investigation was the analysis of cognitive variables rather than the general idea of parental effects on child aggression. The research investigation was done well and involved reviewing different secondary sources to determine the connection between parenting styles and child aggression. Fantasy suggested that the aspects of child and parent, the organization of emotional regulation, how a child approaches a problem, and the process of a child's executive functions depend upon what type of parent was identified as authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, or uninvolved.

The analysis found that the Authoritative Parenting style enhances abstract thinking, which decreases aggressive behaviors and outcomes over time in aspects like problem-solving skills. The latter stems from the timely communication that brings out the best in children and empowers them to exercise self-control, hence reducing aggression. Authoritarian parenting also negatively influences social and motor development, self-regulation skills, and mental problem-solving. The sparing disciplinary approach and limited communication lead to increased aggression because children cannot control their emotions and exhibit proper conduct.

In the Permissive Parenting style, children raised in an environment without many restrictions and structure have poor self-regulation, and their skills related to executive functions are underdeveloped as well. This results in more impulses and the development of aggressive behavior. Uninvolved parenting significantly interferes with healthy cognitive development, affecting one's ability to attach and reduce cognitive abilities. The lack of love also leads to aggression because of problems related to the lack of aptitude for natural emotion regulation.

Hence, the research findings give visible proof that parental factors and, more specifically, the various types of parenting play a crucial role in the development of aggression among children within the age range of 5 - 9 years. Authoritative parenting, thus integrating positive and negative control, decreases aggression. In contrast, negative control inherent in authoritarian parenting, absence of structure in permissive parenting, and lack of attentiveness to children in uninvolved parenting increase a child's aggression stemming from impaired cognition.

The study also has some limitations. The studies used in most of the analysis mainly were correlational; therefore, they cannot ascertain causation. The parents may over-report some expenses, while the children may under-report them. Also, most of the studies were carried out in Western societies, negating the findings of this research in other cultural settings.

Some sources of bias include preference, detection, information, and personal bias. The research has also pinpointed issues related to cultural differences, which would impact the research results since parenting styles are defined differently in different cultures and the cultural contexts in which the studies were conducted. These factors should be noted when discussing the research results.

This extended essay's strength comes from a detailed discussion of secondary sources and the emphasis on cognitive processes. It provides a well-rounded understanding of how different

parenting styles¹³ impact child aggression. However, the reliance on correlational studies and self-reported data is a significant weakness. The cultural limitations of the sources also reduce the generalizability of the findings.

Future research could improve the essay by including a more diverse range of studies from different cultural contexts. Longitudinal studies that track changes in behavior over time could provide more robust evidence of causation. Additionally, incorporating qualitative data from interviews or case studies could offer deeper insights into the cognitive processes involved.

In conclusion, this extended essay successfully explored the relationship between parental influence and the formation of aggression in children aged 5-9 through cognitive mechanisms. By addressing the limitations and proposing suggestions for further research, the essay provides a solid foundation for understanding how parenting styles impact child aggression and highlights areas for future investigation.

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