

Inter-generational Transfer of Parenting Styles



Amanda J. Wood & Meagan M. Krause
Advised by: Dr. Susan Wolfgram,
University of Wisconsin-Stout

What are Parenting Styles?

There are three main parenting styles used in this research study:

- Authoritative- Parents set limits and are flexible.
- Authoritarian- High behavioral standards, and little communication.
- Permissive- high nurturance and communication but little discipline, guidance, or control.

It is important to recognize parenting styles because negative parenting styles can suppress healthy development in the child the parent whose parents use those styles.

Research Problem

The inter-generational transfer of parenting styles can potentially lead to negative effects on child development or stimulate healthy child development (Kitamura et al., 2009).

Research Question & Hypothesis

Research Question: How do parenting styles and the associated parenting strategies in a sample of on-site child care parents transfer inter-generationally from their own parents?

Hypothesis: We predicted that parents would use the same parenting strategies that are associated with the parenting style that they perceived their parents used.

Purpose of the Study

1. Determine if there are current parenting factors that are associated with the inter-generational transmission of parenting styles.
2. Develop a reliable survey instrument
3. Increase the knowledge for professionals who are able to inform parents on how to avoid transference of negative parenting styles that affect child development.

Literature Review

Gfroerer et al. (2011) closely examined how personality affects parenting styles. **Scharf and Mayseless (2011)** The study found attachment between the participants and their parents played an important role in the prediction of parenting styles adopted.

Kitamura et al. (2009) examined relationships between parenting styles being inter-generationally transmitted and whether it would be mediated by personality. **Kovan et al. (2009)** Examined longitudinal studies by comparing parenting styles inter-generationally. **Campbell and Gilmore (2007)** Examined inter-generational continuities and discontinuities in parenting styles.

Frequency Distribution

<i>Variable</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>N A/D</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>PEW</i>	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	30.00%	70.00%	100.00%
<i>ATD</i>	0.00%	20.00%	40.00%	30.00%	10.00%	100.00%
<i>PEE</i>	0.00%	10.00%	40.00%	30.00%	10%	100.00%
<i>ATE</i>	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	70.00%	30.00%	100.00%
<i>ADN</i>	40.00%	40.00%	20.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
<i>PEC</i>	0.00%	10.00%	10.00%	60.00%	20.00%	100.00%
<i>ANE</i>	0.00%	0.00%	10.00%	60.00%	30.00%	100.00%
<i>ATC</i>	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	20.00%	80.00%	100.00%
<i>ANW</i>	0.00%	30.00%	30.00%	30.00%	10.00%	100.00%
<i>PED</i>	30.00%	50.00%	10.00%	10.00%	0.00%	100.00%
<i>ANC</i>	60.00%	30.00%	10.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
<i>ATW</i>	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	40.00%	60.00%	100.00%

Dependent Variables

- **PEW** (I usually show affection when interacting with my child)
- **PED** (I seldom discipline my child for behavioral misconduct)
- **PEE** (I allow my child to behavior in a silly child like manner)
- **PEC** (My child is usually able to communicate with me clearly and consistently)
- **ATW** (I actively work to have a warm and friendly attitude when interacting with my child)
- **ATD** (When disciplining my child I am flexible when distributing punishment)
- **ATE** (I have moderate expectations that my child will act in a mature manner appropriate to their age)
- **ATC** (I often try to initiate conversation with my child)
- **ANW** (I have a firm attitude when interacting with my child)
- **ADN** (I usually spank my child when they misbehave or physically stop them from misbehaving)
- **ANE** (I have high behavioral standards for my child)
- **ANC** (My child seldom initiates conversation with me)

Pearson Correlation Matrix

<i>Variable</i>	<i>ADN</i>	<i>PED</i>
<i>ATD</i>	-0.653*	0.745*
<i>PEC</i>		-0.808**



Methods

Participants- N=13: 12 females, 1 male from a Northwestern Wisconsin Childcare Center. Research Design- Non-random pilot study, Cross sectional, Purposive and Snowball sampling. Data Collection Instrument- IRB approved survey, informed by literature & theory, implied consent. Questionnaires administered by the Childcare Center Director with demographic questions and 12 closed ended statements based on a 1-5 Likert Scale. Data Analysis Plan- Cleaned & coded survey, analyzed data using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS); frequencies, mean-comparisons, and correlations.

Theoretical Framework

The Social Learning Theory is learning from observing and modeling through Attention, Retention, Reproduction, and Motivation. The social learning theory would predict that parenting styles transfer inter-generationally through observation of one generation by the subsequent generation.

Results

We found strong support for our hypothesis between variables: **ATW, ATC, ATE, ATD** because all parents agreed with these statement's. These variables were related to the authoritative parenting style. All of our participants endorsed Authoritative Parenting Style that their parents used which resulted in not comparing groups.

Correlation Results: There is a positive relationship between being flexible in distributing punishment (ATD) and seldom disciplining the child (PED). There is a negative relationship between being flexible when distributing punishment (ATD) and spanking my child when misbehaving (ADN). There is a negative relationship between child communicates clearly and consistently (PEC) and seldom disciplining child (PED).

Discussion

Implications for Practitioners: Professionals, and other individuals who work closely with parents can explain which parenting techniques and strategies are most beneficial, and why using these strategies is so important.

Implications for Future Research: Future research may include a random large national sample, demographic statements regarding race/ethnicity, religion, and socioeconomic status.

Conclusion

Generations can be changed positively when made aware of this research through the help of family scientists and practitioners. This research further supports the Social Learning Theory, and offers support to the idea that modeling shapes individuals throughout a childhood of watching and listening to the behaviors of their parents (Sincero, 2011).