

The Parenting Style that Yields Better Academic Performance in Tertiary Students

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DOI: 10.53103/cjess.v2i1.21

Abstract

Parenting plays a significant role in the life of any child. The type of parenting a child is exposed to can determine a lot of things in the person's life. One such significant variable is academic performance. In the Ghanaian context, this study delves into finding out the parenting style which most of the academically inclined (with high CGPA) tertiary students in the Greater Accra region are exposed to in their homes. By extension, this study searches for the parenting style that positively affects tertiary students' academic performance. To achieve the objectives of this study, data is gathered from questionnaires administered to students and interviewing of lecturers. This study therefore identifies and describes the prevalent parenting styles and also finds out the strengths and weaknesses of the identified main parenting practices. Lastly, it concludes and recommends neglectful parenting style as the best parental practice when it comes to the academic success of tertiary students.

Keywords: Authoritarian, Authoritative, Permissive, Neglectful, Academic Performance

Introduction

Parenting, which includes all the activities and responsibilities involved in nurturing a child, is a challenging action that captures the different approaches used to socialize and to control children by parents (Baumrind, 1991; Areepattamannil, 2010). Every parent or guardian enrolls his or her ward in school with the anticipation that the latter will perform exceptionally well at the end of his or her period of study. Nonetheless, the expectation of good academic performance most often remains an "ideal wish" of the parents and not the reality, because several factors influence academic performance. Among the factors known to have an influence on the academic performance of students are: class size (Borland, Howsen & Trawick, 2005); student engagement (Dogan, 2015); motivation of teachers (Young, 1988 as cited in Ofosu-Asiamah, 2013); the academic and professional qualification of the teachers (Agyeman, 1986); student-teacher relationship (Toma, 2020); and the instructor's knowledge of the subject area being taught (Hong et al.,

2021). Aside these and many other researched factors, parenting style as a variable has also featured greatly in many other studies to be a major contributor to students' academic achievement (Brown & Iyengar, 2008; Areepattamannil, 2010; Nyarko, 2011; Munyi, 2013).

In the accounts of Yang and Zhao (2020), parenting style is an important factor which contributes to students' academic performance. Hence, if parents fail to apply the suitable parenting style, prepare the child adequately and sufficient parental involvement in the areas pointed above, the child is likely to achieve poor academic results in school (Tope, 2012). Undoubtedly, parents have crucial responsibilities in the development of the intellectual abilities of their kids by enrolling them into schools to receive quality education. Apart from enrolling their children in schools, parents have a role to play in the academic achievement of their wards through the kind of parenting style they adopt. In a study on the differences in parenting styles by Baumrind (1991), Diana Baumrind did identify several parenting styles which she termed as 'family types': authoritative (authoritarian); democratic (authoritative); directive (mix of authoritarian and permissive); good-enough (permissive); nondirective (mix of permissive and neglectful); and unengaged (neglectful) families. It was out of her study that the four main parenting styles, being authoritarian, authoritative, permissive and neglectful have being recognized in literature. Although there have been many other parenting styles recognized in contemporary studies, they all have their routes in these four basic parenting practices.

Due to the effects that parenting styles have on the growth of a child's academic and social attainments as well as personality traits, the type of parenting that one adopts has therefore become a key area of study in education in recent times (Nyarko, 2011; Tope 2012). Chungalwa, Ndurumo and Poipoi (2012) conducted a study in Kenya to ascertain the relationship between parenting styles and alcohol abuse as well as academic excellence in college students. The findings of the study showed that, students who performed poorly academically had parents who put much value on their children's autonomy, but also involved them in open communication (authoritative parenting style). The study also found that, most parents in Kenya adopted the authoritarian parenting style and hence, used corporate punishment as a medium to control their wards. However, in the case of Ghana, studies on different parenting styles and how they affect learners' academic performance have mostly focused on primary and senior high schools. For instance, Ofofu-Asiamah (2013) conducted a study to determine the impact of parenting styles on the academic performance of students in the senior high schools, particularly in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality. Therefore, this research is appropriate since it seeks to find out the particular parenting style which is the best to help tertiary students in Ghana succeed academically.

This study therefore has three basic objectives: it seeks to identify and describe the main parenting styles as identified in literature and experienced by students in some selected tertiary institutions in the Greater Accra region of Ghana; identify some strengths

and weaknesses of the main identified parenting styles; and finally find out the parenting style which helps students at the tertiary level to academically perform better.

Literature Review

The Concept of Parenting

Parenting in simple terms is the process (not a one time-event) of raising a child and ensuring that the child is well catered for in terms of needs to ensure the child's healthy development from childhood all the way to adulthood (Faull, 2006). When one has a child, it is realistic for the individual to assume the responsibility and process of parenting. Parenting therefore involves the process of developing and applying the skills and knowledge suitable to planning for, giving birth to (or adopting), providing care, creating, and/or nurturing of offspring (Jenkins, 2012). This description infers that parenting begins when there is an intention for it and it includes not just raising children, but also catering for them as well. Being a parent is a lifelong commitment which involves responsibilities as parents such as taking good care of children physically as well as psychologically (Faull, 2006).

Types of Parenting Styles

Parenting styles are helpful in understanding complex practices and states of mind connected with child outcomes (Rodriguez, Donovan & Crowley, 2009 cited in Munyi, 2013). Parenting is therefore not a one-technique affair. Therefore, due to individual differences, upbringing, choices, psychological attributes and the like, there are types of parenting styles. Some researchers have suggested that there are ten parenting styles which included; authoritative, undifferentiated, demanding, democratic, traditional, rejecting, neglecting, authoritarian, nondirective and permissive. However, Brown and Iyengar (2008) in their study discovered that parenting styles are frequently altered by preceding generations and are handed down by culture. Therefore, the following are some of the parenting styles that can be found currently in literature.

Authoritarian: Parents of this parenting style are typically demanding but not responsive. Authoritarian parents permit for very little open communication between the parent and the child and expect the child to follow a firm set of rules and expectations. Authoritarian parents usually rely on punishment to demand obedience or teach a lesson (Nur, Setyaningrum & Novandita, 2021). Although the rules and structure associated with authoritarian parenting are necessary for healthy child development, overdoing these good things is a possibility.

Authoritative: This type of parenting style is very easy to recognize, as they set high expectations for their children, but do temper these expectations with understanding and support (Nyarko, 2011). This parenting type is arguably the most helpful parenting

style as it creates the healthiest environment for a growing child, and helps to foster a productive relationship between parent and child. There is open communication with the child in authoritative parenting style. If a parent can foster the ability to speak to his or her child without judgment or reprimand, they will be more likely to have insight into the child's life and understanding, providing the child with a deeper understanding of the world around him or her.

Permissive: Permissive parenting is potentially a catastrophic style of parenting. In this sort of parenting which is also known as indulgent parenting, parents are undemanding but responsive (Nur et al., 2021). These parents tend to be excessively kind and gentle to their children and make all effort to prevent confrontation with their children. While some parents are basically afraid to do anything that will cause distress to their children, others adopt this method as an extreme opposite approach to their authoritarian upbringing.

Neglectful: Unlike the other styles, neglectful parents mostly seem not to care about their children. Sometimes referred to as uninvolved parenting, this parental practice is characterized by a huge lack of responsiveness to the children's needs. Additionally, such parents often do not make any demands of their children and often seem as indifferent about the needs of their children (Yu, Kim & Lee, 2019). Neglectful parents typically are unresponsive and undemanding. They show less love and provide little support and affection. They hardly set rules and also do not outline expectations from their children or guide them on behaviour shaping. Such parents usually seem emotionally distant from their children with limited interaction with the children.

Instinctive Parenting: Parents who adopt this parenting style tends to follow their intuitions or go with the attitude flow. That is, this style involves the parent relying on 'gut' feeling and respond when presented with a situation. A major characteristic of this parental style is that, parents try to bring up their children in the same way as they were brought up. They also make all effort to follow the same rules and reasoning that their parents applied to them during their childhood. However, the major feature is that, parents rely a lot on their instincts and intuitions to make parenting decisions.

Free-range Parenting: This type of parenting is characterized with fewer guidelines for the children. A free-range parent will typically value his or her kids becoming more independent and letting the children do whatever they want most of the times. It therefore shares characteristics with permissive parenting. However, with this, a parent will interfere slightly if the children are veering off totally, although the children are given the chance to explore without interruptions. Free-range parents normally leave their children to play or engage in activities without supervision.

Helicopter Parenting Style: In this case, parents typically interfere in the life of their children to a large extent. Technically, the opposite of free-range parenting. It is exactly like a helicopter that hovers, hence the name. Parents make all efforts to overprotect

their children and continuously make sure the security and safety of the children are guaranteed. Children brought up through this parenting style tend to be excessively dependent on their parents for minor and major things in life (Schiffrin et al., 2019).

Slow Parenting: Parents who practice slow parenting meddle less in the affairs of their children and permit them to make their own choices and decisions. The idea behind this style of parenting is to ensure that the children are pleased with their own accomplishments and are content. Parents practicing this style let their children be what they really want to be and eventually permit them to develop their own interests. Also, children are allowed to explore the world at their own speed. As such, these children are able to adequately handle the pressures and challenges that the real unpredictable world brings. While some authors believe this parenting style is the same as free-range parenting, others believe they are slightly different. Children under slow parenting or simplicity parenting are allowed by their parents to take the helm of their affairs and grow as per their perception.

Attachment Parenting: In this style of parenting, maximum prominence is given to developing a solid emotional tie between children and parents. In this type of parenting, parents are highly sensitive towards their children's needs and are always available for emotional support (Garba, 2020). It is believed that children raised by attachment parents feel secured, happy and peaceful because parents believe in home schooling, natural births, and no corporal punishments. In effect, the 'attachment' aspect is not only in terms parental responsiveness but also continuous bodily closeness sometimes.

Equalitarian Parenting: With this parenting style, parents give their children choices which create a democratic feeling in the home. The entire family works like a team, thereby subjecting every member to the set rules and regulations. The atmosphere at home gives the ambience of team spirit. Children learn the art of negotiating and bargaining at an early age as they are given a say in family issues. Parents are extremely alert towards the issues of their children and slipups are seen as avenues for learning.

Spiritual Parenting: Under spiritual parenting it is the belief that when children are imbued with strong spiritual morals, their self-esteem escalates and they are therefore empowered. Although this is not a scientific approach, children are encouraged to develop an intimate relationship with God and to also develop methods that will lead to a balanced life (Dube, 2018). This parenting practice depicts that parents must depend and obey God and fully trust the power of God in order to produce a home atmosphere that God can use to beckon the children of the house to Him. Children from such homes are being raised to acknowledge the presence and relationship with a higher power who is loving and should be looked at for guidance.

Positive Parenting: Positive parents consistently care, lead, teach, and provide the needs of their children. This type of parenting style is built on strong family principles and it is also perceived as a common-sense parenting. It is a tactic where the children are

supported, loved, given warmth, cared for and provided an optimistic environment built on trust and respect. To be equipped to manage the unforeseen situations that may come up later on in life, parents work on their children's dreams and strategize to shape their self-confidence (Kyriazos & Stalikas, 2018). The parent's role is to inspire their children to have faith in themselves, provide guidance, and motivate them to take charge of their own destiny and move to their own beat.

Concerted Cultivation: This is a particular style of helpful parenting in which attempts are made by parents to help sharpen the talents of their children by engaging them in extra-curricular activities (Maxwell & Aggleton, 2013). It is also characterized by increasing the use of language and the capability to interrelate with social bodies. Due to the children's introduction to academic clubs, musical groups, sports and more, children raised through this style of parenting do express higher social abilities than other children.

Narcissistic Parenting: Narcissism is the chase of fulfilment from vanity or egocentric and selfish esteem of one's own attributes: excessive self-love. Therefore, narcissistic parents are parents predisposed to narcissism or narcissistic personality disorder. Narcissistic parents are domineeringly very close to their children and mostly turn out to be envious of their children's freedom (Edery, 2019). That is, a narcissistic parent normally tends to be possessively close to her child and feel really threatened by the child's growing independence. These parents usually make terrible parents. The children are exclusively considered to accomplish the parents' wishes and needs. Narcissistic parenting harmfully affects children in their reasoning, emotions, and in areas of societal and decent behaviours as they mature. A wrong self of being mutually dependent in relationships is developed by the children whiles they grow up.

Nurturant Parenting: With this method of parenting, children are raised to scout their environments through the protection of their parents. Parents under this parenting style are certain that their children should be conscious of what they want and should be permitted to discover. The parents therefore protect their children whiles the children explore (Weymouth, Fosco & Feinberg, 2017). As with all other parenting styles, although this one also has its disadvantages, the nurturant parenting approach centers on responsibility, empathy and creativity. Simply put, nurturing parents use nurturing touches, empowerment, unconditional love and compassion to make sure their children are in good health.

Toxic Parenting: Toxic parents are parents whose own harmful behaviour harms their children's sense of self. In this form of parenting, children are usually sexually, verbally and/or physically abused. The children's emotional needs are also ignored or not provided adequately. Children under toxic parents therefore mature into adulthood and imitate their parents' behaviour as their parents' behaviour become an established pattern that they are accustomed to. Toxic parents are known to constantly exhibit behaviours that can cause fear, panic, and guilt in their children (Munyua & Disiye, 2020).

The Concept of Academic Performance

Academic performance identifies with the positive personality structures, which envelop self-esteem, self-adequacy, and motivation. Academic performance can be characterized as a self-managed learning, including excellence in games, culture, conduct, confidence and communication abilities, and it indicates how learners control their feelings, emotions, and actions keeping in mind the end goal to academically accomplish. It is also the measurement of a student's academic numerical achievement (Dogan, 2015). Therefore, for Ghana and most parts of the world, education organization is controlled by examination-oriented training where passing exams is frequently the fundamental standard for assessing performance since there is no internal structure of monitoring learning accomplishments. Hence, one basic way of measuring academic performance is using the marks or points of a student as assessed by an academic faculty.

Methods

Two different sets of data were gathered to address the three objectives of this study. A questionnaire was used to achieve objective 1 and 3 while an interview (semi-structured) was carried out for that of objective 2: hence the employment of both quantitative and qualitative research design. Under the quantitative research design, the assessment research method was utilized by the researcher to enable the researcher make use of numbers in the interpretation of the quantitative data. On the other hand, the qualitative data from the interview was thematically analyzed to come out with defined themes in order to summarily identify at least two strengths and weaknesses each of the main identified parenting styles.

The data was collected from three universities in the Greater Accra region of Ghana which consisted of one public university and two private universities, where a specific college or faculty was chosen in each case. While the students answered the questionnaire for the quantitative phase, the lecturers who were also parents were interviewed for the qualitative phase. The simple random sampling technique was used to select the students while purposive sampling technique was utilized for the lecturer-parent's selection. Out of over a hundred and fifty questionnaires distributed, a total of 133 out of the collected was fully and properly filled and therefore could be used for analysis. For the proper criteria of a lecturer who is also a parent, with possibly of the child at the tertiary level, the researcher was able to interview 12 lecturers after a long time of chasing and rescheduling sessions.

The questionnaire consisted of the usual demographic information, an updated version of the Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ) which was originally designed by Buri (1991), and a place for the declaration of the respondents' Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA). Due to the fact that the original PAQ consisted of questions that seek to

measure only three of the main four identified parenting styles, other items to measure the fourth one were added based on previous studies.

Results & Discussion

Objective One

This study had three objectives. The first objective was to simply identify and describe the main parenting styles as identified in literature and experienced by students in the selected tertiary institutions in Greater Accra region of Ghana. Therefore, as revealed by literature and supported by the respondents, the main parenting styles identified by this study were four: authoritarian, authoritative, permissive and neglectful. To enable respondent's identity, the key descriptions of these major parenting styles, the mean scores of the parental authority questionnaire employed for this study was used.

In terms of authoritarian parenting, from the mean scores, there is the indication that the most prominent feature of this parenting style emphasizes on the use of force by parents to compel children to do what they want. This type of parenting from the findings attained the highest mean score value of 3.77. Another key feature of authoritarian parenting style revealed by the respondents indicated with a mean score of 3.66 was that children do not have a say in decision making and a mean score of 3.65 suggested that there is the application of force on the part of parents in order to ensure conformity to rules and regulations. Moreover, it was re-echoed by students which is represented with a mean score of 3.63 saying that the authoritarian parenting style is characterized by doing things immediately as instructed by one's parent without asking questions; and children not having their own way as often as parents do (mean score=3.60). These analyses imply that, the findings of the study regarding the description of authoritarian parenting style are in line with literature and the theory by Baumrind (1991).

With regards to authoritative parenting practice, it was established that the most prominent feature is enhancing participative decision making. This is because, per the responses, it was realized that, with a mean score of 3.51, children under authoritative parenting are allowed to share their opinions during decision making in the family. Additionally, the respondents affirmed that authoritative parenting style is characterized by parents establishing strict values of behaviour for children while growing up. However, unlike authoritarian parenting, an authoritative parent ensures that these standards or strict values of behaviour are adjusted to satisfy individual needs of children in the family which was represented with a high mean score of 2.77. Additionally, a mean score of 2.75 also proved that authoritative parenting is distinguished by a clear sense of direction set by parents for children in which the children are also free to share their opinions with their parents especially, when they disagree with them. To sum it up, the study provided evidence regarding the description of authoritative parenting style which comprised the

following: encouraging participative decision making with direction from parents and setting standards for children to follow while tolerating their opinions as well as providing clear sense of direction for children. It must be emphasized that, these findings from the study are in congruence with the descriptions from Baumrind's understanding of authoritative parenting style.

On permissive parenting style, through the assessment of the mean scores, key features as depicted by respondents were that children are provided with the opportunity to discuss expectations set by parents whenever they felt it was unreasonable and this is represented with a mean score of 2.89. Another characteristic of permissive parenting style is that while the children or students were growing up, they had the opportunity to make their parents do what was of interest to them (the students) when making family decisions. Likewise, with a mean score of 2.07, it was established that permissive parenting is distinguished by parents rarely forming expectations for their children when growing up. Lastly, permissive parenting style is characterized by children, signifying a mean score of 2.04, whose parents make them feel that kids are not expected to obey rules and regulations because some authorities have instituted them. All these conform to the assertions made by a number of authors. Hence, the implication is that, children under the permissive parenting have too much freedom to do what they think is right with little or no direction from parents.

Lastly, on neglectful parenting, based on the results from the data gathered from students, it was found that a key feature of this parenting style is lack of sense of responsibility on parents to punish children when they go wrong which attracted a mean score of 2.29. Other features of the neglectful parenting identified include the following: parents not being responsible for directing and guiding the behaviour of children with a mean score of 2.25; avoiding the views of children in decision making and not communicating the outcome of family decisions to children which is represented by a mean score of 2.10; parental refusal to direct the behaviours, activities and desires of children in the family with a mean score of 2.06; and parents refusing to set expectations for children concerning their lives.

Objective Two

The second objective of this study was to identify some strengths and weaknesses of the main identified parenting styles. To achieve this, the sampled lecturers who were also parents were interviewed which provided data to this effect. Therefore, with the responses from the parents with regards to the strengths and weaknesses of the authoritarian parenting styles on students, it was realized that most of the respondents asserted that students under authoritarian parenting style tend to be very self-disciplined at school. This, they explained that it is because students who grow up under such parenting style only

know that a lot is demanded from them but under very unresponsive atmosphere. Also, some of the respondents were of the view that students under authoritarian parenting abide by rules and regulations in school. This is because authoritarian parents allow minimum open discussion between parents and children and require them to adhere to stringent instructions and expectations. This summarized the strengths of authoritarian parenting on students. On the other hand, in terms of weaknesses of this parenting practice, about half of the respondents attested that authoritarian parenting brings about low self confidence among students since the structure of rules to be followed are usually too rigid, therefore, there is no room for flexibility. Others also affirmed that students under authoritarian parenting are mostly fearful and shy because parents frequently use punishments to demand submission from them.

With regards to the strengths of authoritative parenting style, a significant percentage of the respondents were of the view that students from such homes exert much confidence in communication whiles other respondents emphasized that such students are able to build productive relationships with their colleagues instead of parents. According to the respondents, this is because under this style of parenting, although high expectations are set for children, parents minimize the expectations with understanding and support for the children. However, on the weaknesses of authoritative parenting style, some of the respondents were of the belief that students under authoritative parenting find it difficult to take personal decisions at school since their parents are usually the decision takers and they take them without consultation but force them to comply without asking questions. Likewise, other respondents stressed that students are mostly under pressure to succeed at all cost in order to satisfy their parents' interest. This is because parents set extraordinary expectations for children.

In the case of permissive parenting style, most of the respondents asserted that students who have experienced such parenting are able to form good relationships with their colleagues at school because they come from very nurturing and loving homes due to the freedom they enjoy at home. Other respondents mentioned that students under permissive parenting normally develop high sense of self-esteem since they experienced much independence. Similarly, according to the results which assessed the weaknesses of permissive parenting practice, it was found out that students under this parenting style lack self-discipline at school. Most of the interviewees gave this assertion. This is so because parents who use this style of parenting are lenient on them since they wish to avoid confrontation with their children. Also, some of the respondents stipulated that students under this practice lack self-control, hence, engage in deviant behaviours most of the time. This is to say that, ordinarily, few instructions are set for the children of permissive parents and rules and regulations are inconsistent when they exist.

Last but not the least, on the strengths of neglectful parenting, respondents agreed that students are less likely to fall victim to peer pressure since they do not easily build

trust with their colleagues, although the lack of building trust can also be a disadvantage. Again, another strength of this parenting style on the student which is partly a disadvantage is that, students from such homes are mostly reserved (with few friends), however, because of this, they are able to concentrate on their academic work and therefore mostly emerge as part of the brilliant pool in the various classes. On the other hand, regarding the weaknesses of this parenting style on the students, the respondents agreed to two main disadvantages: students are seen to develop low self-confidence and students find it difficult to build relationships with their colleagues at school.

Objective Three

The third and last objective of this study was to find out the parenting style which helps students at the tertiary level to academically perform better. In order to achieve this objective, the researcher used the Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) of the respondents.

Table 1: Number of respondents and their parents' parenting style

Parenting Style	Number of Respondents
Authoritarian	57
Authoritative	42
Permissive	26
Neglectful	8
Total	133

Table 2: Parenting style of respondents with highest CGPA

No.	Parenting Style	CGPA
1st	Neglectful	3.81
2nd	Neglectful	3.75
3rd	Neglectful	3.46
4th	Authoritative	3.40
5th	Neglectful	3.37
6th	Authoritative	3.29
7th	Neglectful	3.25
8th	Neglectful	3.21
9th	Authoritarian	3.18
10th	Authoritative	3.11

Table 3: CGPA range according to parenting style numbers

CGPA Range	Parenting Style	No. of Respondents
4.00 – 3.51	Neglectful	2
3.50 – 3.01	Neglectful	6
	Authoritarian	17
	Authoritative	22
3.00 – 2.51	Authoritative	20
	Permissive	26
	Authoritarian	29
2.50 – 2.00	Authoritarian	11

From Table 1, it can be deduced that out of a total of 133 students who fully responded to the questionnaires, the parents of 57 of them are authoritarian, 42 authoritative, 26 of permissive parents and only 8 from neglectful parental homes. Rationally, the parenting style with the highest number of respondents (being authoritarian) should who see more people with excellent academic performance. However, as presented in table 2, out of the 8 people who are from neglectful parenting homes (from a total of 133), 6 of them are among the first 10 respondents with excellent CGPAs. As a matter of fact, the first 3 respondents with the highest CGPAs are from neglectful homes. This is the first and most important signal enabling this study to conclude that, perhaps, neglectful parenting is the best form of parenting when it comes to the academic success of students at the tertiary level.

Secondly, from Table 3, the CGPA of respondents from neglectful parenting homes appear in the first two ranges (that is 4.00 to 3.01). Still on Table 3, although, authoritarian features in both the second and third categorical ranges, due to its extensive representation in the last category and none in the first and highest category, it cannot be said to be the best parenting practice that helps students in the tertiary level to achieve academic laurels. Quite shocking and against literature is the findings concerning authoritative. Just like as explained above, although it has representation in the second and third category ranges, because it does not feature in the highest, it cannot be said to be the best for students at the tertiary level as far as academic achievement is concerned, although it can be rated as second best. Lastly, it cannot be said that permissive parenting is the best under this study's defined circumstance because all the students who took part in this survey have a CGPA which falls within the third categorical range.

Hence, it can therefore be interpreted and concluded that students from neglectful parenting homes perform better at the tertiary level than the others from the other parenting style homes.

Conclusion

This study identified several types of parenting styles. However, the four main parenting practices are authoritarian, authoritative, permissive and neglectful parenting styles. According to the findings of this study, authoritarian parenting style is dictatorial in nature and parents apply force to ensure that their wards comply by their rules and regulations. It was found that although students with such parents are mostly law abiding to school regulations, they normally have a low self-esteem and are mostly shy and fearful. Respondents who checked the boxes and therefore have such parents had CGPA ranging from good to average. Hence, out of the four main types, this study does not recommend authoritarian parenting for parents with their children at tertiary institutions if they want the students to excel academically.

Although literature and past studies have linked authoritative parenting to enhanced academic success of students, this research found otherwise. That is, from all indication, authoritative parenting style which is characterized by participative decision making and effective communication between parents and their children while ensuring a sense of direction for child behavior does not appear to be the best parenting style to positively affect the academic performance of tertiary students. Although this study found out that authoritative parenting ensures the development of a higher sense of academic achievement in students as well as exerting confidence in communication, it also puts a lot of pressure on the students to succeed and students often find it difficult to take personal decisions. With the CGPA of respondents from authoritative parents not part of the highest scores, this authoritative style was not recommended as the best parenting practice for tertiary students.

On permissive parenting style, this study found out that it is characterized by excessive warmth from parents while little control is exercised on children in terms of their expectations and students' academic performance. In terms of strength, it instills a higher sense of self-esteem and students are able to form relationships on campus. However, students from such homes also lack self-discipline at school and often engage in deviant behaviours. With respondents belonging to an average CGPAs, this study does not recommend this parenting style as the best to help tertiary students achieve academic excellence.

However, in direct contradiction to what can be found in existing literature, neglectful parenting style was rather found to be the best when it comes to enabling tertiary students to succeed academically. This is because respondents belonging to this parenting style recorded the most excellent CGPAs to be made available to this study. Also, all the respondents belonging to this parenting group had CGPAs between excellent and good. Although the study found that students from neglectful parenting homes usually have a low self-confidence and find it difficult to build relationships with their colleague, they are able

to concentrate on their academic work due to their reserve nature. Such students do not also easily fall victim to peer pressure because they simply do not easily build trust with their colleagues. Another important point to point out is that, during the data collection, some of the interviewees actually mentioned that some of the students they know who are from neglectful parenting homes fend and take care of themselves on campus. That is, their parents have nothing to do with them: not paying their school fees or any expenses; no interest in their wellbeing. As a result, such students are engaged in part-time employments to be able to afford their expenses while schooling and such students are usually serious with their academic work since they are aware of the hardships they go through in order to cover their academic expenditure.

This study therefore recommends that parents who have their children at the tertiary level should practice neglectful parenting if they wish for excellent and above average academic results for their children. That is, this study is not recommending a neglectful parenting to every parent but rather to parents in a specific category (children in tertiary level) and that by adopting some characteristics of neglectful parenting while their children are in school, will help the children with their grades. Hence, parents should ensure the following: a decreased desire to physically punish the students when they go wrong; to be somehow uninvolved and leave the children alone (but definitely pay for their academic expenses); to be unresponsive by not showing too much care about the performance of their children; show lack of interest in the children's school activities; refrain from setting rules and expectation; lower their level of cordiality and control; drastically decrease their level of emotional attachment to their children; and refrain from trying to direct, guide and impose their will on the children. If parents who have their children at the tertiary level do these, by this study, their children will perform well exceptionally academically.

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