

**A NATURALISTIC OBSERVATION ON THE EFFECTS OF THE DIFFERENT  
PARENTING STYLES ON LEARNERS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE****Richie B. Loren**

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**ABSTRACT**

This study aimed to observe and analyze the effects of different parenting styles on learners' academic performance and classroom behavior. The participants of the study were 5 Grade I learners enrolled at Musuan integrated School and their respective parents in Musuan Maramag, Bukidnon. Using a qualitative descriptive research design, naturalistic observation was conducted within the learners' authentic classroom settings, the research sought to identify specific parenting behaviors that influence learners' engagement, motivation, and social interactions. It also aimed to determine which parenting practices are most effective or ineffective in promoting desirable academic outcomes. Findings revealed that authoritative parenting, characterized by warmth and structure, positively affected learners' academic engagement, confidence, and cooperation. In contrast, authoritarian tendencies led to discipline but reduced self-expression and initiative. The study underscores the importance of a balanced parenting approach that integrates emotional support with consistent guidance in fostering academic and socio-emotional development. Practical implications are offered for parents, teachers, and policymakers to create an environment that fosters academic achievement while simultaneously enhancing learners' academic motivation and engagement, thereby promoting active participation and sustained involvement in the learning process.

**Keywords:**

Academic performance, authoritative parenting, authoritarian parenting, permissive parenting, neglectful parenting

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**INTRODUCTION**

Parenting plays a crucial role in shaping a child's emotional, social, and academic development. The home serves as the first learning environment where children acquire habits, attitudes, and values that influence their behavior in school. According to Diana Baumrind's (1971) framework—later expanded by Maccoby and Martin (1983)—there are four major parenting styles: authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful. Each style differs in warmth, communication, and control, which significantly affect children's motivation, discipline, and engagement in learning.

While research shows that authoritative parenting often fosters higher academic performance and social competence, other styles may hinder these outcomes. Authoritarian parenting, for instance, may produce obedience but limit creativity, while permissive and neglectful approaches can lead to poor study habits and low self-regulation (Steinberg, 2001; Lamborn et al., 1991). These differences highlight the importance of

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understanding how parenting behaviors influence children's learning experiences. Observing how these patterns appear in the classroom offers a meaningful way to connect home-based parenting practices with children's real-life academic and social behaviors.

Despite extensive studies abroad, there is limited local research that explores the relationship between parenting styles and children's classroom behavior through direct observation in the Philippine context. Cultural norms, family structures, and community values uniquely shape Filipino parenting practices, which in turn affect learners' engagement and performance. This study therefore seeks to examine how different parenting styles influence Grade 1 learners' academic behavior through naturalistic classroom observation. The findings aim to provide valuable insights for teachers, parents, and policymakers in fostering supportive home-school partnerships that promote both academic growth and emotional well-being among young learners.

### OBJECTIVES

In line with the research questions, this study is guided by the following objectives. These objectives are formulated to provide a clear direction for the investigation and to determine how various parenting styles and specific parental behaviors influence learners' academic performance, motivation, and classroom interactions.

Specifically, this study aims to:

- 1) To identify the specific parenting behaviors that influence learners' academic performance across different parenting styles
- 2) To determine which parenting behaviors are most effective and ineffective in promoting positive academic outcomes for learners
- 3) To describe how each parenting style affects learners' participation, motivation, and social interaction in class through daily observations

### METHODOLOGY

This part outlines the methods and procedures used in the study. It discusses the research design, locale, participants, data collection procedure, and ethical considerations that guided the investigation. The methodology was structured to ensure credible results in examining how different parenting styles influence learners' academic performance and classroom behavior.

#### Research Design

This study utilized a qualitative descriptive research design anchored in naturalistic observation to explore how various parenting styles influence learners' academic performance and classroom behavior. The design allowed the researchers to observe children in their natural classroom setting without interference, capturing authentic behaviors such as attentiveness, motivation, participation, and peer interaction. Through this approach, the study sought to present a realistic and comprehensive understanding of how parental practices are reflected in children's daily school engagement.

#### Research Locale

The research was conducted at Musuan Integrated School in Musuan, Maramag, Bukidnon. The school offers a natural learning environment that mirrors the everyday experiences of young learners, making it an ideal setting for examining the influence of parenting styles on classroom behavior. Observations were carried out inside Grade I classrooms during regular academic activities to ensure that all recorded behaviors took place in a familiar and unaltered environment. This setting allowed for the collection of authentic data reflecting the learners' typical interactions and engagement in their natural school context.

#### Participants

The participants of the study included five Grade I learners, aged six (6) to seven (7) years old, along with their respective parents. The selection of participants was conducted with the assistance of the classroom teacher. Each learner represented one of these styles to allow comparative analysis. Participation in the study was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all parents prior to data collection.

**Data Collection Procedures**

The researchers conducted four observation sessions, each lasting approximately forty (40) minutes, over the course of one week. Observations were performed during regular class hours, specifically during periods that involved interactive or academic activities. The researchers served as non-participant observers, meaning they did not interfere with classroom routines or learner interactions.

During each session, detailed field notes were recorded to capture children's academic engagement, participation, emotional regulation, and interaction with peers and teachers. The completed checklists were then compared across cases to identify patterns associated with specific parenting styles. After the observation period, data were organized and analyzed thematically to extract recurring behaviors and trends.

**Ethical Considerations**

The study strictly adhered to established ethical research standards, particularly those concerning research involving young children. Prior to data collection, permission to conduct the study was obtained from the school principal and the classroom teacher. In addition, written informed consent was secured from all parents, ensuring that participation was entirely voluntary and that participants were fully aware of the study's purpose and procedures. To uphold confidentiality, pseudonyms were used in place of real names, and all collected data were treated with the utmost privacy. The observation process was conducted discreetly to minimize researcher influence and maintain the authenticity of children's natural classroom behavior. All information gathered was utilized exclusively for academic and research purposes.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This part presents the discussion of results drawn from the collected data through classroom observations, field notes, and standardized checklists. It integrates findings from three major instruments: the Parenting Style Questionnaire (PSQ), Academic Performance Rating Scale (APRS), and the Naturalistic Observation Checklist. Guided by the Present–Analyze–Interpret–Support (PAIS) framework, the data were qualitatively analyzed to explain how various parenting behaviors influence Grade I learners' academic performance, motivation, and classroom engagement. Through this triangulated analysis, the chapter provides a comprehensive understanding of how parenting practices within the home environment are reflected in learners' academic and social behavior in school.

To present the findings systematically, each research instrument is accompanied by a corresponding table that consolidates key results and highlights significant patterns emerging from the data. Table 1 presents the results from the Parenting Style Questionnaire (PSQ), detailing the frequency and nature of specific parenting behaviors under the authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive styles, and examining how these behavioral patterns shape learners' motivation, confidence, and academic engagement. Table 2 outlines the outcomes from the Academic Performance Rating Scale (APRS), which reflect teachers' evaluations of learners' attention, task performance, and classroom conduct, thereby establishing a link between home-based parenting practices and observable academic consistency and effort. Finally, Table 3 synthesizes insights from the Field Notes and Naturalistic Observations, describing the qualitative dimensions of learners' participation, social interaction, and emotional responsiveness as manifestations of the parental support and guidance they experience at home.

Collectively, these tables serve as the foundation for the integrated analysis and interpretation that follow, reinforcing the study's triangulated approach to understanding how parenting styles influence academic development.

**Table 1. Specific Parenting Behaviors That Influence Learners' Academic Performance Across Different Parenting Styles (Source: Parenting Style Questionnaire – PSQ)**

Parenting Style	Dominant Response Level (Qualitative)	Least Observed Behavior	Observed Variability	Interpretative Summary
Authoritative	Often/Always (warmth, reasoning,	Occasional inconsistency in	Moderate	Predominant across respondents; promoted

	encouragement)	enforcing rules		confidence and motivation among learners.
Authoritarian	Sometimes/Often (control, reminders of authority)	Open dialogue and empathy	Moderate	Less frequent; led to compliance but reduced expressiveness.
Permissive	Sometimes/Rarely (leniency, giving in)	Structured rule-following	Low	Least observed; linked with inconsistent task focus.

The Parenting Style Questionnaire (PSQ) had provided the basis for understanding the parental behaviors that influenced learners' academic performance. The data revealed that most parents predominantly exhibited an authoritative style, characterized by warmth, responsiveness, and rational discipline. They frequently explained rules, encouraged independence, and considered their children's emotions when making decisions. In contrast, authoritarian parenting, which emphasized obedience and control, appeared in fewer responses, while permissive parenting, which lacked consistent boundaries, was least observed. This pattern indicated that most families of the participants maintained a balance between structure and empathy, consistent with Baumrind's (1991) conceptualization of authoritative parenting as the most developmentally supportive style.

Further analysis showed that the authoritative behaviors reported by parents translated into children's greater confidence, motivation, and academic engagement. Parents' frequent use of reasoning and encouragement built emotional security that empowered children to participate actively in school activities. Similarly, Ugwuanyi, Okeke, and Njeze (2020) found that learners raised in authoritative households performed significantly better than those from authoritarian or permissive homes. This trend reflected the Filipino value of *disiplina na may malasakit*—discipline with compassion—where warmth and accountability coexisted, creating an environment conducive to learning.

The interpretation of these findings underscored the critical role of parental communication and emotional sensitivity in shaping a learner's approach to academics. Supported by Bornstein (2019), who highlighted that consistent parental modeling of empathy and persistence strengthened children's internal motivation. In contrast, excessive control limited creativity, while leniency reduced persistence. These results affirmed Bandura's (1977) social learning theory, which posited that children mirrored the emotional tone and discipline patterns modeled at home. Thus, positive parental modeling—anchored in warmth and consistency—formed the foundation for academic engagement and responsible classroom behavior.

Overall, the PSQ results suggested that specific parenting behaviors such as reasoning, communication, and consistent rule-setting directly influenced learners' academic disposition. The predominance of authoritative parenting across respondents indicated that families who integrated empathy with structure raised children who were more confident and motivated to learn. Authoritarian and permissive styles, though present, yielded less balanced outcomes. These findings reinforced the notion that effective parenting cultivated both moral understanding and cognitive competence—an essential interplay for academic success.

**Table 2. Parenting Behaviors That Are Most Effective and Ineffective in Promoting Positive Academic Outcomes for Learners (Source: Academic Performance Rating Scale – APRS)**

APRS Dimension	Dominant Teacher Rating	Least Observed Rating	Observed Variability	Interpretive Summary
Academic Output	Sometimes - Often	Never	Moderate	Learners completed tasks with some lapses but showed effort.
Accuracy	Sometimes	Rarely	Moderate	Task accuracy varied; some showed carefulness, others rushed.
Attention	Rarely - Sometimes	Very Often	High	Attention was inconsistent; several required prompting.

Consistency	Sometimes	Consistently successful	High	Work quality fluctuated across sessions.
Classroom Management	Sometimes - Often	Never	Moderate	Participation was generally active but varied per learner.
Task Behavior	Sometimes	Very Often	Moderate	Some learners exhibited carelessness or needed assistance.
Social Adjustment	Sometimes - Often	Rarely	Moderate	Cooperation with peers and sociability were generally observed.

The Academic Performance Rating Scale (APRS) had offered teacher-based insights into how these parenting styles translated into learners' academic behaviors.

Results showed moderate to high variability across the dimensions of attention, consistency, and task accuracy. Learners from authoritative homes performed more steadily, often completing tasks with focus and showing initiative during lessons. Teachers rated them "sometimes to often successful," noting their enthusiasm and willingness to participate. In contrast, learners from authoritarian families followed directions precisely but lacked spontaneity, while those from permissive homes demonstrated enthusiasm but struggled to sustain concentration or finish written tasks accurately.

Analysis of these ratings highlighted how structure and emotional responsiveness at home directly shaped classroom outcomes. Authoritative parents, by maintaining predictable routines and reinforcing effort, likely helped their children develop persistence and intrinsic motivation. Meanwhile, the high variability in attention and consistency suggested that some learners lacked sufficient reinforcement at home, particularly those from permissive families. These findings aligned with Lamborn et al. (1991), who emphasized that consistent parental expectations promoted self-regulation and academic steadiness.

Interpreting these patterns through theoretical lenses further clarified the dynamics at play. According to Kohlberg's (1984) theory of moral development, learners under authoritative parenting might have been operating within the conventional moral stage—understanding and valuing classroom rules not merely as authority mandates but as shared social responsibilities. Conversely, those from authoritarian households tended to comply out of obligation rather than comprehension, showing external regulation instead of internalized discipline. Permissive environments, by contrast, provided freedom without boundaries, resulting in fluctuating academic effort and limited task ownership.

The APRS results collectively demonstrated that the most effective parenting behaviors for academic success were those that blended affection with structure. Learners raised in homes that emphasized communication, feedback, and responsibility showed greater focus, perseverance, and moral awareness. These results validated Baumrind's (1991) claim that authoritative parenting supported both achievement and socio-emotional development and extended Bandura's (1977) assertion that modeled consistency fostered self-regulated learning behaviors observable in the classroom.

**Table 3. Influence of Each Parenting Style on Learners' Participation, Motivation, and Social Interaction in Class Through Daily Observations (Source: Field Notes / Naturalistic Observation Checklist)**

Participant	Observed Classroom Behavior	Interpretative Summary
1	Always smiling with his friends but attentive and able to answer questions.	Demonstrated positive social interaction and attentiveness; behavior suggests influence of supportive and structured (authoritative) parenting.
2	Bright, can answer when the teacher asks a question.	Reflected confidence and task engagement; indicates emotional security and active learning encouraged by open

		communication at home.
3	Friendly, talkative, energetic, and able to answer the teacher's question.	Exhibited enthusiasm and verbal expressiveness; consistent with warm, communicative parenting that nurtures participation and sociability.
4	Quiet but at the same time talkative, also attentive.	Showed adaptability and balanced engagement; suggests disciplined yet expressive tendencies shaped by firm but understanding parental guidance.
5	Talkative, attentive, and able to answer the teacher's question.	Displayed a mix of confidence and responsiveness; reflects consistent parental encouragement and balanced autonomy at home.

The field notes and naturalistic observations had revealed deeper qualitative patterns in how parenting styles influenced learners' participation, motivation, and social interactions in the classroom. These observed traits collectively reflected the home atmosphere—learners raised in warm and communicative households exhibited confidence and participation, while those from more controlling or lenient homes displayed either caution or inconsistency.

Analyzing these patterns showed that parenting styles shaped not only academic focus but also socio-emotional behavior. Authoritative parenting encouraged openness and curiosity, leading to active participation and collaborative learning. Authoritarian parenting, while producing respectful and disciplined learners, limited self-expression and creativity. In contrast, permissive parenting fostered sociability and enthusiasm but lacked the focus and self-discipline needed for sustained task engagement. These distinctions suggested that home environments emphasizing both empathy and guidance promoted the healthiest balance of academic and social growth.

Interpreting these behaviors through established theories provided further depth. Bowlby's (1988) attachment theory posited that children who experienced consistent emotional responsiveness from caregivers developed secure attachments that manifested as confidence and social competence. Similarly, Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory asserted that guided participation with adults enabled children to internalize regulation and cooperative behaviors. The observed attentiveness, participation, and empathy among learners of authoritative parents reflected these theoretical foundations, suggesting that positive emotional scaffolding at home enhanced learning dispositions in school.

The field observations, therefore, reinforced that parenting influences extended beyond academics into moral and social dimensions. Learners who experienced positive communication and stable emotional support at home became more confident, cooperative, and resilient in classroom settings. Authoritative parenting fostered learners who were self-driven and morally reflective, authoritarian parenting nurtured compliance but limited autonomy, and permissive parenting yielded friendliness but diminished academic focus. Together, these findings affirmed that balanced parenting—anchored in warmth, reasoning, and discipline—nurtured holistic development encompassing intellect, emotion, and morality.

These findings collectively affirmed that the authoritative parenting style—grounded in Baumrind's typology, reinforced by Bandura's social learning, and supported by Vygotsky's sociocultural principles—created the most favorable foundation for both academic and moral development. Ultimately, the study upheld that "academic excellence and moral character began at home," where empathy, consistency, and discipline converged to nurture lifelong learners.

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### CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Parenting behaviors rooted in warmth, open communication, and consistent guidance strongly influence learners' academic performance and classroom behavior. The PSQ results showed that most parents practiced an authoritative style, which combines firm expectations with emotional support. Learners raised in these homes exhibited attentiveness, confidence, and initiative in academic tasks. Authoritarian parenting, marked by strict discipline and limited emotional responsiveness, promoted compliance but constrained creativity and expression. Meanwhile, permissive parenting, which lacked clear boundaries, fostered friendliness but weakened focus and task completion. These findings confirmed Baumrind's (1991) assertion that authoritative parenting cultivates independence, self-regulation, and motivation—essential elements for academic success. In the Filipino context, this reflects the cultural value of *disiplina na may malasakit* (discipline with compassion), where structure and empathy coexist to create a nurturing learning environment.

2. The most effective parenting behaviors for promoting positive academic outcomes are those that balance emotional warmth with behavioral structure. Data from the APRS indicated that learners whose parents maintained consistent routines, reinforced effort, and communicated expectations performed more steadily in class. They completed written work with greater accuracy, displayed persistence, and demonstrated responsible behavior. In contrast, excessive control limited students' self-motivation, while overly lenient practices resulted in inconsistent academic performance. These results align with Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory, which emphasizes that children learn through modeled behaviors and consistent reinforcement. Authoritative parents serve as strong role models, teaching accountability while allowing autonomy. Therefore, balanced parental practices—firm yet nurturing—were found to yield the highest levels of academic focus, motivation, and performance among Grade 1 learners.

3. Parenting styles also shape learners' social adjustment, motivation, and classroom engagement. Learners from authoritative homes actively participated in class discussions, interacted confidently with peers, and demonstrated enthusiasm toward learning activities. Those raised under authoritarian parenting were disciplined and respectful but less expressive, often waiting for direction rather than taking initiative. Meanwhile, learners from permissive households were sociable and energetic but displayed lower task persistence and attention span. These patterns affirm Vygotsky's (1978) Sociocultural Theory, which emphasizes the role of guided interaction and emotional responsiveness in developing children's self-regulation and social competence. In essence, authoritative parenting supports holistic development—nurturing both academic and socio-emotional growth—while other styles show limitations either in autonomy or in discipline.

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### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Parents are encouraged to strengthen balanced and communicative parenting practices that reflect the principles of authoritative parenting. They should establish open dialogue with their children by regularly discussing school experiences, setting fair and consistent rules, and explaining the reasons behind them. Recognizing and praising effort rather than outcomes can motivate children to persevere in academic tasks. Schools and local communities are likewise encouraged to conduct parenting workshops emphasizing positive discipline and emotional responsiveness. Through consistent communication, warmth, and rational guidance, parents can cultivate environments that nurture both academic excellence and emotional security in their children.

2. Teachers and schools are encouraged to complement positive parenting practices by creating classroom environments that mirror structure and warmth. Teachers should establish clear routines, provide consistent feedback, and reinforce responsibility through encouragement rather than punishment. Communication between home and school must be strengthened through regular parent-teacher updates that align classroom goals with home expectations. Schools may also initiate parent education programs focused on supporting learners' study habits, time management, and persistence. By aligning home routines with classroom practices, both teachers and parents can sustain learners' motivation and ensure continuity of behavioral expectations that enhance overall academic performance.

3. Schools and future researchers promote and explore strategies that reinforce both social competence and self-regulation among learners. Teachers can design classroom activities that encourage peer collaboration, autonomy, and shared responsibility, such as cooperative learning and reflective group projects. Learners from authoritarian homes can be supported through confidence-building activities, while those from permissive households may benefit from structured goal-setting and attention-training exercises. For future researchers, it is recommended to conduct longitudinal studies examining how parenting styles influence socio-emotional and moral development over time, incorporating mixed methods such as interviews and focus group discussion for richer contextual understanding. Such continued research and intervention can further bridge home-school collaboration and promote well-rounded learner development.

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