

Influence of Parenting Styles on Children's Behaviour

Janet Olufunke BAMIDELE

Oyo State Teaching Service Commission, Ibadan Oyo State, Nigeria

folafem2018@gmail.com

08052344570; 09077592942

Abstract

This article explores parenting styles and children's behaviour. The researcher looked into different parenting styles in order to examine which of the styles leads to the children's moral decadence, which ultimately makes the children to be morally bankrupt and violate the laid down rules and values of the society. Hence, through this article the researcher attempts to bring up an original contribution by identifying the missing gap in the literature thus offering valuable recommendations for future research on the way parents raise their children to have a well behaved grown up children that will meet up with moral standard of any given society. Though, much research work has been carried out on the role of parents in raising their children to be future responsible leaders, however, our society still experience behavioural problems among children today. Therefore, more detailed research work is needed to be conducted on the different parenting styles that may help the parents in shaping the behaviour of their children. The researcher recommends among others that the authoritative parenting styles should be mostly adopted.

Keywords: Parenting Styles, Moral Decadence, Children's Behaviour

Introduction

Nowadays, we live in a society that is deteriorated, morally blind and dead. Moral decadence is one of the emerging concerns not only in Nigeria but also across the entire world. Saleem (2011), asserted that youths in Karachi are largely kept in custody for snatching or stealing of mobile phones robberies and other petty crimes. This assertion confirms the high rate of moral decadence. It is disheartening to also discover that our children most especially adolescents and youths of these days are morally bankrupt. Adebisi (2018), opines that moral

decadence is a decline in the moral values of individuals and society at large. That is the rejection of laid down rules and values of the society which is caused by numerous factors among which parenting style is the chief, because the first contact of a child in life is his or her parents or caregivers. It is discovered that parents no longer have any control over the discipline of their children. This make children to behave anyhow in the society, thereby involving themselves in immoral behaviours such as cheating, selfishness, deception, organisational misconduct, lying, theft and a lot of other forms of unethical behaviours that are posing great challenges in our society today. Hence, the need to examine deeply the complexities of parenting as touching the lasting effect it has on the child's behaviour.

Children's Behaviour

Nowadays, moral laxity or decadence is the order of the day. Moral decadence is said to be the decay of ethical values and norms that are govern an individual and the society at large. It is discovered this day that, there is a lots of breaking down of laws and immoral behaviours among children. Examples of this immoral behaviours in our society are deception, cheating, organisational misconduct and other forms of unethical behaviours are among the greatest challenge that buttress on the fact that parents are no longer inculcating morals into their children as of old because they themselves may not be taught of morals talk less of considering that for their children.

Behaviour simply refers to how one conducts themselves. Behaviour is how someone acts, that is a response to things that are happening around both internally and externally. It is people's actions, reactions, and functioning in response everyday environment and situations. A term that is used for behaviours that interferes with a child's daily life is "Challenging Behaviour." No child has perfect behaviour. All children behaviour depends on a number of reasons such as biological, emotional, socioeconomics temper tantrums etc. (Deepak, 2022). Children display a number of behaviours that often reflect their perception of the situation they are into. These ranges from passive, shy

or withdrawn to cooperate, aggressive and destructive. Actually ,there many factors that can influence children's behaviour .It is important that we find out and identify why children behave the way they do , so as to develop strategies to assist them in managing their behaviour. Parents is recognised as the prime educator. It is beneficial for them to adopt a workable parenting style.

Child Behaviour Theories

Child development focus on how children learn through interactions with their environment. To the behaviourists, learning and development results from association, rewards and punishments. When a behaviour is reinforced by someone, there is a greater likelihood of the behaviour to reoccur in the nearest future (John Wiley, 2008).

Furthermore, child development theorists focuses on understanding and explaining how children changes from infancy to childhood. Hence, a framework or lens by which parents and caregivers can better our understanding of the all-round development of children are provided by theories. As a matter of fact, theorists have made us to understand that the way children think and behave is very different from how adults do due to their parenting background and environment they found themselves.

Prominent among children behavioural theories are:

- 1) Freud's psychosexual child theory
- 2) Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory
- 3) Behavioural Theories
- 4) Piaget's Cognitive Development Theory
- 5) Social Learning Theory
- 6) Attachment Theory
- 7) Ecological Systems Theory

Few of the aforementioned child development theories will be briefly discussed as it affecting parenting styles and child's behaviour. According to Sigmund Freud, childhood events and experiences are focused on mental disorder rather than normal functioning. Freud opines

that children progress through a series of psychosexual stages in life. Each of these stages involve what is referred to as a libidinal desire that can later play a vital role in adulthood. The stages of Freud's child development theory are:

The Oral, Anal, Phallic, Latent and the Genital Stages. If a child does not successfully complete a stage, such a child would develop a fixation that would in turn influence his adult personality and behaviour later in life. No child can successfully pass through each stages without the help of a parent, guardian or caregiver. Hence the parenting style of parents or caregiver at each of the stages cannot be overemphasized for it goes a long way to determine or influence the behavioural disposition of the child later in adulthood.

Another theory is that of Erikson, popularly known as Psychosocial Development Theory. This theory was influenced by the work of Sigmund Freud but Erikson's own theory on child development is focused on the important of social experiences that the child has. Erickson believed that such experiences go a long way to shaping the child's psychological growth. Unlike Freud's theory, Erickson's theory covers development the entire lifespan of a child from birth to death. Furthermore, Erickson opines that people faces a crisis which must be mastered at each stage of development .He said mastery of the crisis leads to development of a psychological virtue. For example, failure of an individual to develop an identity during adolescent stage will result in role confusion later in adulthood. The implication is that, role confusion makes a child to be morally bankrupt which could be traced to parenting style used at each stage of the child's development (Erickson, 1993, 1950).

Behavioural theory is another popular theory that was developed in the early twentieth century. Behaviourists like John B. Watson, Ivan Pavlov and B.S. Skinner here asserts that learning and development results from association, rewards and punishment. According to the behaviourist, John Watson, any behaviour can be learnt (Paul, 2023). For example, classical conditioning which involves developing an association

between a previously neutral stimulus and a stimulus that automatically can result in a response/ behaviour which might either be positive or negative. Also, mention is made of Operant Conditioning that asserts that learning could be as a result of positive reinforcement punishment. The consequences of the behaviour determine how likely it is for such a behaviour to occur again in the nearest future significantly depend on the parenting style at this stage of child tells much on his future behavioural development.

Parenting

Parenting is a very tasking, but an interesting job that embraces lots of love, challenges and wisdom to take countless decisions. It is worth of here that the way we raise our children will profoundly goes a long way to influence their cognitive, emotional and most especially behavioural development in life.

Parenting or child rearing is the process of raising and providing children with protection and care in order to ensure their healthy development into adulthood. Parenting also refers to all the intricacies of raising, supporting and promoting the physical, emotional, social, cognitive and spiritual development from infancy to adulthood.

Parenting is said to be a complex process in which the way you interact with your child and how you discipline him or her will influence the child for the rest of his or her life. As such, there are many contributing factors or reasons that may be responsible for parents to have choosing to behave the way they do. Prominent among these factors are:

- 1) Parents characteristics
- 2) Child characteristics and
- 3) Contextual and Sociocultural characteristics

This calls for Parenting Styles

What is Parenting Styles?

Parenting style is a pattern of behaviours, attitudes and approaches that a parent uses when interacting with and raising their child. Parents differs in their patterns of parenting .These patterns can have a significant impact on their children's development and well-being (Hong, 2021). Children go through different developmental stages throughout their childhood. Parents create their own parenting styles from a combination of factors that came up over time. Therefore, parenting styles in most cases tend to adjust to changes as children begins to develop their own personality. Thus, what is referred to as binding relationship between Parents – Child relationship during infancy while adolescent parents on the other hands face new challenges as adolescents begins to seek and for freedom (dangx111 ,2011) . Some early research studied parenting along arrange of dimensions such as level of democracy, emotional involvement, responsiveness, control, acceptance, dominion and restrictiveness (Hong, 2021).

Parenting styles vary from group to group, race to race or ethnicity, social class, preference and some other social features. People, such as parents, caregivers or surrogates who exhibit caring or raising children with good parenting skills could be referred to as good parents (Elizabeth, 2014). While those who handle children with lesser – faire attitude are described as neglectful or bad parents.

Furthermore , it has been observed by researchers that parents, guardians or caregivers leave the house very early in the morning in search of means of livelihood/survival only to come back home late in the night, weak and tired, leaving their children at the mercy of outsiders. They also abandon their responsibilities to technological devices which results in bad habits that children learnt from television, films, video games, telephones, internet and other social networks. All these are reflected in their permissive lifestyle, drug abuse, indecent dressing, and wild partying. These aforementioned immoral behaviours give rise to moral decadence and crime in society such as prostitution,

abortion, raping, 419, armed robbery, cultism, child trafficking and abuse of different kinds (Obiano, 2016).

The level of immoral behaviours or moral decadence of children in Nigeria today is highly disturbing and poses a serious challenges to the society well – being and security. This is traceable to the fact that parents or caregivers of today are not found on the duty post due to their non – availability and basically the parenting styles of our modern day parents and caregivers. This, then leads us to the types of parenting styles and the impact they have on the behaviour of children.

Types of Parenting Styles

Research has shown that Parenting Styles can significantly influence children's self-esteem, emotional regulation social skills and overall behaviour. Hence, the four major parenting styles are discussed below:

- 1) Authoritative Parenting
- 2) Authoritarian Parenting
- 3) Permissive Parenting
- 4) Neglectful Parenting

Authoritative Parenting

This parenting style is characterised with moderate control, warmth, communication, responsiveness and clear expectation. Children raised by authoritative parents often tend to exhibit higher levels of self-esteem, improved social skills and better emotional regulation. This type of parenting style gives room mutual respect, fosters open communication and also create a nurturing environment aids healthy behavioural development.

Authoritarian Parenting

Authoritarian parenting is linked to the negative outcomes due to strict rules, high expectations and low emotional warmth. Children raised by an authoritarian parents exhibit higher levels of anxiety, lower self – esteem and difficulty in social interactions in children. This type of parenting style has serious negative impact on a child's behavioural

development and this can be traced to some factors such as the lack of emotional support from parents or caregivers and heavy focus on obedience and discipline.

Permissive Parenting

Permissive parenting style refers to a type of parenting style that can contribute to behavioural challenges in children. This is because it is characterised by high emotional warmth and lower levels of self – control or discipline. As such, children raised by this type of parenting style struggles with understanding boundaries.

Neglectful Parenting

This type of parenting style is otherwise known as Uninvolved parenting style. It is another parenting style that is associated with negative outcomes that pose emotional and behavioural problems in children. It is always characterised with low warmth and low discipline. To form healthy relationships becomes very difficult for children that are raised by neglectful or an uninvolved parents.

It is important to note here that all the parenting styles discussed above has one impact on the other on children's behaviour such as genetics, temperament and peer relationship.

Conclusion

Significantly, parenting styles has impact on children's behaviour development. Though, there is no right way to parenting style but having a good understanding of the influence of different parenting styles on children's behavioural development can help parents and caregivers to create supportive and nurturing environment that can promote positive behavioural outcomes. The way parents relate to their children in shaping their behaviour matters a lot through the openness of permissiveness or the warmth guidance of the authoritative parenting styles, for either of the parenting style surely leaves a lasting impact on our children.

Assuredly, authoritative parenting style tends to be a bit reliable and better among all styles. This is because children that are brought up with this type of parenting style always have the confidence to speak up and show empathy to understand other people in relationship.

Hence, to the caregivers, parents and the would- be-parents out there, it is worthwhile to know that there is no secret formula or perfect way of parenting, but parents should embrace moderation, open communication, warmth, love, understanding, clear expectation and consistency together in raising a well behaved grown up children who takes their mistakes as lessons and their challenges as opportunity for better growth.

Recommendations

- 1) Parents should opt authoritative parenting rather than authoritarian parenting styles.
- 2) Parents should exhibit different parenting styles in different situations because no parent is perfect, thus understanding their parenting choice can help them to become the best of parents can be.
- 3) Parents should spend more time with their children so as to reduce and curb the probability of developing negative behaviour or moral decadence.
- 4) Parents should continuously be involved their children's developmental processes or stages so as to prevent them from associating themselves with law breakers and committing crimes.
- 5) Parents, through better understanding of their own parenting style can help them to change from their more strict, indulgent or dismissive approach and become better involve in the way they relate with their children.

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