

**Influence of parenting style on involvement in the education of public preschool learners in Nandi Central Sub County, Nandi County, Kenya.**

**Mary Jebii Chemagosi**

Maryjebii65@gmail.com

P.O Box 170 – 50305 Sirwa, Kenya.

0727283039

PhD Candidate in early childhood development and education  
Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology

**Dr. Benson Charles Odongo**

Bensonod747@yahoo.com

P.O Box 210 - 40601, Bondo, Kenya

0713748047

Department of Early Childhood Education, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University.

**Dr. Peter J.O. Aloka**

jairopeteraloka@yahoo.com

P.O Box 210 - 40601, Bondo, Kenya

0726742892

Department of Psychology, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University

**Declaration**

This article is my original work and has not been presented for any publications in any other journal.

Mary Jebii Chemagosi

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**Abstract**

The study established the influence of parenting style on involvement in education of public preschool learner, in Nandi Central Sub-County, Kenya. The study adopted the Concurrent Triangulation design within the mixed methods approach. The target population was 3566 which was composed of 183 head teachers' public primary school, 183 lead teachers of public Early Childhood Development Education and 3200 parents of top class in Nandi Central Sub-County, Kenya. The study adopted purposive and simple random sampling techniques to sample respondents. The ECDE parents were sampled using stratified random sampling technique. The sample size for the study was 462. This composed of 74 public head teachers, 74 lead teachers of public early childhood Development Education and 320 parents. The instruments used were questionnaires and interview schedule. The pilot study was done in two schools and test re-test method was used to determine the instrument's reliability and a Cronbach alpha co-efficient of 0.804 was reported. Validity was ensured through expert judgment by my supervisors. The researcher utilized thematic analysis. Inferential statistics such as ANOVA and post Hoc tests were used to analyze quantitative data. The study found out that authoritative parents were more involved in the education of their children. The study recommended that, parents should come up with the best child rearing practices that enhances parental involvement in the education of preschool learner performance.

**Keywords:** Parental style, Authoritative, Authoritarian, Permissive

**1.1 Background of the study**

According to Berger (2001), there are three types of parenting styles: authoritarian, permissive, and authoritative. Authoritarian parenting, also termed dictatorial or harsh, is low on warmth and nurturance, strict on discipline, high in parent-to-child communication but low in child-to-parent communication, and high on expectation. This style has been predominant throughout Western history: "It was effective in status quo times, for example in agrarian-industrial societies. Authoritarian parents show little affection and "seem aloof from their children". Parents instruct and order, do not consider the children's opinion as a group, and discourage verbal give-and-take. Obedience, respect, and tradition are highly valued. Rules are non-negotiable, parents are always right, and disobedient children are punished-often physically. However, parents "do not cross the line to physical abuse". As children obey their parents in order to avoid punishment, they become passive. Authoritarian parents also expect a level of maturity higher than the norm for their child's particular age group: "The authoritarian parents assign the child the same responsibilities as adults". Responsiveness is low, as the approach is parent-centered and stresses the parent's needs.

According to Barakat and Clark (2006), Permissive parenting, also labeled as neglectful or disengaged parenting, is high on warmth, very low on discipline and structure, low in parent-to-child communication but high in child-to-parent communication, and low on expectation. Permissive parents are nurturing, warm, and accepting. Their main concerns are to let children express their creativity and individuality and to make them happy, in the belief that this will teach them right from wrong. Permissive parents find it hard to set clear limits, provide structure, are

inconsistent disciplinarians, and reward bad behavior regularly. Children are not pushed to obey guidelines or standards that, even when they do exist, are not enforced.

According to Berger (2001), authoritative parenting is high on warmth, moderate on discipline, high in communication, and moderate in expectations of maturity. This style is becoming more pervasive in the West. Authoritative parents are warm and nurturing, create a loving home environment, and provide a high degree of emotional support.

Similarly, Steinberg (2007) stated that authoritative parents set developmentally appropriate limits and standards for behavior. Parents make it clear that they will help their children. If their demands are not met, they are forgiving and understanding rather than punitive. Overall, this parenting style is high on mutual understanding and based on reciprocity. Developmental opportunities are provided for children, as the quality of interaction and nurturance is high and expectations are realistic. In addition, such parents are more likely to encourage academic success, which has a positive correlation with good grades. This can be attributed to parental involvement in their children's education and their use of open, give-and-take communication through family reading, writing, and discussions. Children are less influenced by negative peer pressure and develop successful peer relationships. As authoritative parenting provides a balance between control and independence, it produces competent, socially responsible, self-assured, and independent children. Children are more likely to develop high self-esteem, positive self-concept, greater self-worth, less rebellion, and generally are more successful in life and education attainment is high.

### **Theoretical framework**

This study is based on Baumrid's Parenting style Theory which identifies four parenting styles: authoritative, authoritarian, permissive-indulgent and permissive-uninvolved (Baumrind, 2010).

The authoritative style is considered the "ideal" parenting style and seems to produce children with high levels of self-reliance and self-esteem, who are socially responsible, independent and achievement-oriented. Authoritative parents set clear expectations and have high standards. They monitor their children's behavior, use discipline based on reasoning and encourage their children to make decisions and learn from their mistakes. They are also warm and nurturing, treating their children with kindness, respect and affection (Okantey, 2008).

Although the word sounds similar, authoritarian parenting is different in many ways from authoritative parenting. The authoritative parent tends to set rigid rules, demand obedience and use strategies such as the withdrawal of love or approval to force a child to conform. These parents are more likely to use physical punishment or verbal insults to elicit the desired behavior. They lack the warmth of the authoritarian parent and may seem aloof to their children. Children of authoritarian parents may be well-behaved, but they are also likely to be moody and anxious; they tend to be followers rather than leaders (William and Jeynes, 2008).

The permissive-indulgent parent is overflowing in parental warmth. This parent may be openly affectionate and loving but sets few or no limits, even when the child's safety may be at risk. Permissive-indulgent parents make few demands for maturity or education, and there are often no

consequences for misbehavior. Children of permissive parents often have problems with controlling their impulses; they may display immaturity and be reluctant to accept responsibility (Anita, 2010). Permissive-uninvolved parenting, also called simply “uninvolved parenting,” is characterized by the same lack of limits or demands seen in the permissive-indulgent style. However, the uninvolved parent displays little or no parental warmth. At its extreme, the uninvolved style can be neglectful or involve outright rejection of the child. Children with uninvolved parents are likely to have low levels of functioning in many areas. They tend to do poorly in school and, particularly as they move into high school, are more likely to exhibit delinquent behavior and to be depressed (Okantey, 2008).

#### **2.4 Influence of parenting style on level of parental involvement in children education in Public preschools**

The meta-analysis conducted by Jeynes, (2007) showed a strong positive association between parental style defined as supportive, loving, helpful and maintaining an adequate level of discipline and academic achievement. These positive associations may be due to the ability of parents with an authoritative parenting style to be loving and supportive and yet maintain an adequate level of discipline in the household. Parents with this parenting style also demonstrate qualities such as trust and approachability that motivate children to discuss academic problems and expectations with their parents. Additionally, such parents are more likely to make contact with teachers when preschools have education or behavior problems.

A study carried out in United States of America by Baumrind (2010) tried to investigate the effect of parenting style during adolescence competence and emotional health. In this study 87 families participated. The researcher found the adolescence whose parents were authoritative during their public preschools years were more competent and well-adjusted in academic relative to those whose parents were authoritarian, permissive and disengaged, however the present researcher will investigate on public preschool children. The present study was done to investigate the involvement of parental style on the education of preschool children in Nandi central, Kenya but not in U.S.A as in the above reviewed study.

Ginsburg and Bronstein (2005) study on adolescents adds that authoritarian parenting is characterized by behaviors that are highly restrictive and extremely demanding. Parents who employ this style tend to constrain children's independence and force them to follow strict rules by threatening harsh punishment for violations. They also tend to be less responsive to and accepting of their children. By preventing children from exercising control over their own behaviors and learning from their mistakes, authoritarian parents inadvertently may be rearing children to believe that they are not responsible for what happens to them. Children and adolescents from authoritarian families tend to perform moderately well in school and to be less involved in problem behaviors than children and adolescents from permissive families, yet they have poorer social skills, lower self-esteem, and higher levels of depression than do children of authoritative parents. The above reviewed study findings were done on secondary adolescents students but the current study was done on preschool learners.

Baumrind (2010) describes authoritative parenting as a more flexible style of parenting in which parents permit their children considerable freedom, but are careful to provide reasons for the restrictions they impose and will ensure that the children follow these laid down procedures. Authoritative parents are responsive to their children's needs and ideas and will often seek their children's views in family deliberations and decisions. But, they expect that their children abide with the restrictions they deem as essential and will use both power, if need be, and reason (i.e., inductive discipline) to ensure that they do (Baumrind, 2010).

Baumrind (2010) also states that, "unlike any other pattern, authoritative upbringing consistently generated academic competence and deterred problem behavior". Authoritative parenting has been found to be an essential factor in an adolescent's life in comparison with the other parenting styles. Authoritative parents also set firm rules but provide rationales to the child, solicit input from the child, and are warm and involved with the child. Permissive parents do not impose limits, rarely discipline the child, are warm and accepting, and often offer unconditional support (De Lisi, 2007). The above reviewed study was conducted on separate male and female children of authoritative parents but the present study was carried out on both children.

Baily (2006), notes that parenting styles impacts student learning outcomes for children at-risk of failing academically especially through their interactions with their children as they complete home learning activities. Imgram, Wolfe and Lieberman (2007) suggest that schools having low learner achievement could benefit from focusing parent involvement efforts on building parenting capacity and encouraging learning at home activities. A survey by King, Kraemer, Bernad and Vidourek (2007) showed that parents prefer authoritative parenting style and were interested in receiving training in parenting, which developed feelings of efficacy and closer relationships inside the family and which will, in turn, influence the academic achievement of children.

Dornbusch (2006) defines permissive parenting (Indulgent) as a warm but lenient pattern of parenting in which parents make relatively few demands, allow their offspring to freely express their feelings and impulses, use as little punishments as possible, make few demands for mature behavior, do not closely monitor their children's activities, and rarely exert firm control over their behavior (Dornbusch, 2006). Baumrind observed in the study of his preschool children that children of permissive parents were immature, lacked impulse control and self-reliance, and showed a lack of social responsibility and independence. In the follow-up studies of children between the ages of 8 and 9 years, she found that these children were low in both social and cognitive competence (Dornbusch, 2006). The above reviewed study was done on pupils aged 8 to 9 years who are primary going children but the current study was conducted among preschool learners aged between 3 to 5 years.

The authoritative, permissive, and authoritarian styles have been examined most extensively and are associated with different levels of social and cognitive competence in public preschool children, children in middle childhood, and adolescents (De Lisi, 2007). The results of these and other studies are consistent and lead to clear conclusions about optimal childrearing styles. Children of authoritative parents earn higher grades in school; are more achievement oriented, independent,

self-reliant, friendly, and cooperative; are less depressed, anxious, and dependent; and show lower levels of internalizing and externalizing behavior problems. Thus, the research literature shows the positive aspects of authoritative childrearing styles over the alternative types of styles.

Permissive parents, at the other extreme, are nonrestrictive, imposing few maturity demands and applying high levels of responsiveness. They either indulge or neglect their children's needs (Strage and Brandt, 2010). Permissive parents allow children to be self-regulated and free from rules or discipline. However, by not setting behavioral limits and goals and not holding children responsible for surpassing or falling short of those limits and goals, parents are failing to teach children that they are responsible for their own behavior. Moreover, children and adolescents from permissive families are susceptible to antisocial peer pressure (Condry and Simon 2009; Steinberg 2010), Such individuals are also more likely to be involved in problem behaviors and perform less well in school, but they have higher self-esteem, better social skills, and lower levels of depression than children raised by authoritarian parents (Strage and Brandt 2010). The above reviewed study was done on adolescent students unlike the current study which was carried out on preschool learners

### **Goal of the study**

The study sought to establish the influence of parenting style on involvement in the education of public preschool learners in Nandi Central Sub-County, Kenya.

### **Research Methodology.**

#### **Research design**

The study adopted Concurrent Triangulation design which consists of both qualitative and quantitative (mixed) methods by (Creswell, 2014). This method consists of qualitative and quantitative research design to confirm, cross- validate, or corroborate findings within this study. Data collection was done concurrently for the study. The design was found appropriate for this study because the researcher wanted to directly merge, compare and contrast quantitative statistical results with qualitative findings or to validate or expand quantitative results with qualitative data.

#### **Study participants**

The study target population was 183 public preschools, 183 public primary head teachers, 183 Early Childhood Development Education lead teachers and 3200 preschool parents. The total target population was 3566. Wolverton, (2009), indicated that (10% to 50%) or more of a population makes a representative sample. The study therefore sampled 39% of both 183 public schools Head teachers and Early Childhood Development Education lead teachers that gave 74 respondents respectively. The sampled size for parents was 10% of 3200 that gave a sample size of 320.



**Research instruments**

The researcher used questionnaires and interview schedule to collect data for the study.

The questionnaire was used in study because the researcher was to get the original information from the parents, Public head teachers and Early Childhood Development Education lead teachers. The semi-structured questions were asked together with some open ended questions. Most of the items adopted a five Likert scale format ranging from (Strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, strongly disagree). The open-ended format allowed more spontaneity of response and provided opportunities for self-expression (Jwan, 2010). The interview schedule was relevant to the study as it provided in-depth information and details and understating of the research issues. The researcher tape recorded the conversation for its coding using a mobile phone to: speed up the interview because there was no writing involved and to reanalyze the data in order to test the objectives (Mugenda, 2013).

To ensure validity of the instruments, experts in the area of qualitative and quantitative research were consulted. A pilot test was done to ensure that questionnaire were well structured and measured the variables. As such, the researcher had to seek for assistance from her supervisors of Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University in order to help improve content validity of the instruments.

Reliability of the instruments was done through testing and retesting. Cronbach's alpha of .804 was calculated by application of SPSS.

Ethical considerations of confidentiality, free participation and right to privacy was ensured.

**Data collection procedure**

First, the researcher got a permit from the Board of Post Graduate Preschools (BPGS) of Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology (JOOUST), obtained a permit to collect data from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI), reported to the assistant sub-county commissioner, Sub-county education officer and sub-county teachers' service commission staffing officer, divisional and zonal officers of Nandi Central Sub-county to notify them of the research study that the researcher was undertaking in their areas of jurisdiction. The researcher personally visited all the 74 sampled schools with an official written letter from the researcher and copies of JOOUST and NACOSTI to plan with the head teachers and ECDE lead teachers about the purpose of the study, type of study instruments to be administered and when the study was to be conducted. Prior arrangement was made on how and when to invite parents for the administration of questionnaires and interview schedule. The researcher gave the ECDE lead teacher questionnaires for the parents. The researcher then left the questionnaire for duration of two weeks and later on came to collect them for data analysis. The administration of the interview schedule took me 30 minutes per respondent.

**Data analysis**

Data was analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitative data collected from questionnaires was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics using statistical

software aid called statistical package of social science (SPSS). Inferential statistics such as independent samples t-test was used to analyze data. Qualitative data was analyzed by using thematic analysis

### Views of the parents on parenting styles

From the study findings, 38.4% (100), of the parents who took part in the study held an opinion that many of the parents were authoritarian, 32.3% (84) were authoritative, while 29.2% (76) were permissive.

### Parents response percentage frequency on influence of parenting style on level of parental involvement in preschool learners' education (n=260)

STATEMENT	SA	A	U	D	SD
Children with authoritative parents perform better academically	150 (57.8%)	63 (24.4%)	37 (14.2%)	3 (1.1%)	7 (2.8%)
Parents disciplining style influences children academic education	41 (15.8%)	49 (18.8%)	87 (33.5%)	52 (20.0%)	54 (20.8%)
Parents type of instruction influences children academic education	63 (24.2%)	100 (38.5%)	63 (24.5%)	17 (6.5%)	17 (6.5%)
Children relationship with their parents influences their school education	104 (40.0%)	72 (27.7%)	18 (6.9%)	16 (6.2%)	50 (19.2%)

Source: Survey data (2015)

From Table above, it emerged that although 90 (34.6%) of the parents were of the belief that disciplining style influences children academic education, majority 40.8% (106) of them negated that reasoning and insisted that disciplining style has nothing to do with academic education of the child. However, 62.9% (163) of parents believed that parents' type of instruction influences children academic education, only 13% (34) of them held a contrary opinion. The findings also show that most 67.7% (176) of the parents who took part in the study held an opinion that relationship of the children with their parents significantly influence their school education. In general, the study findings indicate that more than four out of five, 82.2% (213), of the parents held the notion that children with authoritative parents perform better academically than other children.



**Parents responses on Authoritative Parenting Style (n=260)**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Always</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Rarely</b>	<b>Never</b>
I am responsive to my child's feelings and needs.	47.7% (124)	21.5% (56)	19.2% (50)	11.5% (30)
I take my child's wishes into consideration before I ask him/her to do something.	30.8% (80)	23.1% (60)	38.5% (100)	7.7% (20)
I explain to my child how I feel about his/her good/bad behaviour.	46.2% (120)	21.5% (56)	24.6% (64)	7.7% (20)
I encourage my child to talk about his/her feelings and problems.	38.5% (100)	23.1% (60)	15.4% (40)	23.1% (60)
I encourage my child to freely "speak his/her mind", even if he/she disagrees with me.	47.7% (124)	21.5% (56)	19.2% (50)	11.5% (30)
I explain the reasons behind my expectations.	27.7% (72)	33.8% (88)	21.5% (56)	16.9% (44)
I provide comfort and understanding when my child is upset.	27.7% (72)	22.3% (58)	24.6% (64)	25.4% (66)
I compliment my child.	32.3% (84)	25.4% (66)	21.5% (56)	20.8% (54)
I consider my child's preferences when I make plans for the family.	18.5% (48)	23.8% (62)	30.0% (78)	27.7% (72)
I respect my child's opinion and encourage him/her to express them.	16.2% (42)	22.3% (58)	24.6% (64)	36.9% (96)
I treat my child as an equal member of the family.	18.5% (48)	27.7% (72)	23.1% (60)	30.8% (80)
I provide my child reasons for the expectations I have for him/her.	32.3% (84)	27.7% (72)	24.6% (64)	15.4% (40)
I have warm and intimate times together with my child.	46.2% (120)	18.5% (48)	11.5% (30)	23.8% (62)

Source: Survey data (2015)

The findings of the study show that 69.2% (180), of the parents' respondents agreed that they were always responsive to the feelings of their children, while 53.9% (140) of the parents accepted that they take their children issues into consideration before they act in school and at home. Baumrind (2010) also agrees with this study by stating that authoritative parents are responsive to their children's needs and ideas and will often seek their children's views in family deliberations and decisions. They expect that their children abide with the restrictions they deem as essential and will use both power to ensure that they do. The study findings from one of the interview excerpt concurs that "I freely discuss with my child educational matters which has helped by child to improve in school education" (Parent,15).

It was evident from the study findings that most of the parents from Nandi Central sub-county always took their time to explain to their children how they feel about their children's good/bad

behavior. 46.2% of the parents who took part in the study confirmed that they always explain to their children their feelings on their children's behavior and another 21.5% agreed that they sometimes do that. However, 23.1% of the parents alluded that they never encourage their children to talk about their feelings and problems. The majority 38.5% of them agreed that they encourage their children to openly talk about their feelings and problems. It was also revealed that majority 47.7% of the parents encourage their children to freely speak their mind in spite of their parents' position. However, 11.5% of the parents respondents observed that they never give such freedom to their children, but 21.5% of them said that although they were not consistent in giving such freedom to their children, they insisted that they occasionally encourage freedom of expression from their children. Baumrind (2010) agrees with this study by describing authoritative parenting as a more flexible style of parenting in which parents permit their children considerable freedom, but are careful to provide reasons for the restrictions they impose and will ensure that the children follow these laid down procedures.

It emerged from the study findings that 27.7% of the parents always explain to their children the reasons behind their expectations while 33.8% confirmed that they only do that occasionally but 16.9% of the parents confirmed that they had never explained that to their children. This study is similar to the findings of Englund, Egeland and Collins (2008) who observed that the expected graduates had higher levels of parent involvement in middle childhood, more supportive parent/child relationships in early adolescence and higher levels of social competence with adults than unexpected drop outs. In addition, the study findings concurs with one respondent who alluded that "*I do encourage my children so that they become big people like president and pilot*"(parent,18).

The study findings show that 27.7% of the parents agreed that they always provide comfort and understanding when their children were upset except 25.4% who responded negatively. De Lisi (2007) also affirms with this study findings by contending that authoritative parents set firm rules but provide rationales to the child, solicit input from the child, and are warm and involved with the child. Permissive parents do not impose limits, rarely discipline the child, are warm and accepting, and often offer unconditional support (De Lisi, 2007). The study findings from one respondent from the interview excerpt concurred that "*whenever my child is frustrated by school activities, I always comfort him by encouraging the child to keep on trying*" (parent,11).

It was established that most parents in Nandi Central sub-county did not believe in giving children preferences while planning for the family. This fact was reflected by 27.7% of the parents' respondents who said they never and 30.0% revealed that although they take their children preferences when planning it was not always. This implies that many parents rarely consider their child's preferences when they make plans for the family. Whereas only 16.2% of the parents said they respect their children's opinion and encourage them to express themselves freely, a significant majority 36.9% of the parents who participated in the study confirmed they never respect their children's opinion and encourage them to express themselves. A study by Maccoby (2008) in U.S.A also agrees with this findings by indicating that as children get orders the rules and regulations exhibited by parents tries to lessen and children gain self-autonym and self-regulated hence the

authoritative type of parents seek to win most children as those type of parents are affectionate. The study findings from one of the interview excerpt asserted that “*I do take into consideration my child’s education and basic needs preferences besides planning of other family needs*” (Parent,28). In conclusion, the study findings show that 46.2% of the parents’ respondents agreed that they always have warm and intimate times together with their children at home.

### Parents responses on Authoritarian Parenting Style

Statement	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
When my child asks me why he/she has to do something I tell him/her it is because I said so, I am your parent, or because that is what I want.	46.2% (120)	23.1% (60)	19.2% (50)	11.5% (30)
I punish my child by taking privileges away from him/her (e.g., TV, games, visiting friends).	38.5% (100)	23.1% (60)	30.8% (80)	7.7% (20)
I yell when I disapprove of my child’s behaviour.	24.6% (64)	21.5% (56)	46.2% (120)	7.7% (20)
I explode in anger towards my child.	40.0% (104)	23.1% (60)	15.4% (40)	21.5% (56)
I spank my child when I don’t like what he/she does or says.	47.7% (124)	21.5% (56)	19.2% (50)	11.5% (30)
I use criticism to make my child improve his/her behaviour.	16.9% (44)	21.5% (56)	33.8% (88)	27.7% (72)
I use threats as a form of punishment with little or no justification.	27.7% (72)	22.3% (58)	24.6% (64)	25.4% (66)
I punish my child by withholding emotional expressions (e.g., kisses and cuddles).	47.7% (124)	23.1% (60)	19.2% (50)	13.1% (34)
I openly criticize my child when his/her behaviour does not meet my expectations.	30.8% (80)	23.1% (60)	38.5% (100)	7.7% (20)
I find myself struggling to try to change how my child thinks or feels about things.	44.2% (115)	23.5% (61)	24.6% (64)	7.7% (20)
I feel the need to point out my child’s past behavioural problems to make sure he/she will not do them again.	42.3% (110)	19.2% (50)	20.0% (52)	18.5% (48)
I remind my child that I am his/her parent.	43.1% (112)	21.5% (56)	19.2% (50)	16.2% (42)
I remind my child of all the things I am doing and I have done for him/her.	16.9% (44)	33.8% (88)	21.5% (56)	27.7% (72)

### Source: Survey data (2015)

From the table above 38.5% , of the parents’ respondents strongly agreed that they always punish their children by taking privileges such as TV, games and visiting friends, among others, away from

them. Similarly, Ferguson (2007) further recommends that parents set clear and firm rules about homework, television watching, and other daily activities, and that they actively seek out-of-school opportunities and extracurricular activities that reinforce school lessons, encourage exploration and creativity, and develop children's special talents. The study findings concurs with a respondent who acknowledged that *"I ensure school related activities have been completed by my child before watching television programs like cartoons and music"* (Parent,31).

On the same note, the findings of the study further confirm that majority 47.7% (124) of the parents who took part in the study bluntly agreed that they always spank their children when they don't like what their children do or say. Similarly, Ginsburg and Bronstein (2005) study on adolescents adds that authoritarian parenting is characterized by behaviors that are highly restrictive and extremely demanding. Parents who employ this style tend to constrain children's independence and force them to follow strict rules by threatening harsh punishment for violations. The study findings from the interview respondent concurs by stating that *"Wrong behaviours from my child are corrected by punishing the child but rewarding good behavior"* (Parent,32).

It also emerged that,46.2% of the respondents strongly agreed that they always tell their children "it's because am your parent" if children ask them a reason for their actions. This characterizes authoritarian parents who allow for little open dialogue between them and their children but expect children to follow a strict set of rules and expectations. Such parents believe that children are, by nature, strong-willed and self-indulgent. They value obedience to higher authority as a virtue unto itself and they see their primary job to be bending the will of their children to that of authority - the parent. A similar study by Litali (2013) found out a responsive type of parents show their willingness to foster individual self-regulation and self-assertiveness being supportive of their children needs which is core value to education. Similarly, study findings from the interview excerpt alluded with the above by acknowledging that *"I always insist to my child to obey the elders because they are his or her parents so as to instill good character in the child"* (Parent,26).

The findings confirmed that majority of the parents accepted that they use threats as a form of punishments to their children without justification, as was reflected by majority 27.5% of the parents respondents. Similarly, some parents punish their children by withholding emotional expressions such as kisses and cuddles from their children. This was pointed out by the majority 47.7% of parents' respondents who said they always do this. This study finding is similar to Monadjem (2007) in South Africa who adds that parenting moderates the impact of parent involvement by influencing the extent of the parent-child interaction. The study findings from one of the interview excerpt conquers that *"I some time withdraw the privileges accorded to my child so that my child does not relent in his education"* (Parent,21).

A significant majority 42.3% of the parents who participated in the study observed that they always point out their children's past behavioral problems and ensure that they do not repeat them again. Ngwiri (2008) findings are similar to the above who argues that because of the absence of the father the responsibility of bringing up children turns mother into rigid and unreasonable dictators in the name of to make things work. Similarly, from the interview excerpt, a respondent concurred that; *"I*

always correct my child's behavior to avoid re-occurring so as to improve his education attainment" (Parent,23).

### Parents responses on Permissive Parenting Style

Statement	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
I find it difficult to discipline my child.	27.7% (72)	33.8% (88)	21.5% (56)	16.9% (44)
I give into my child when he/she causes a commotion about something.	27.7% (72)	22.3% (58)	24.6% (64)	25.4% (66)
I spoil my child.	32.3% (84)	25.4% (66)	21.5% (56)	20.8% (54)
I ignore my child's bad behaviour.	18.5% (48)	23.8% (62)	30.0% (78)	27.7% (72)
I don't care about whatever my child does so long as he/she is not in problems.	16.9% (44)	21.5% (56)	33.8% (88)	27.7% (72)
I compromise my rules to accommodate my child's mood	27.7% (72)	22.3% (58)	24.6% (64)	25.4% (66)
I do not have set limits or rules for my child	47.7% (124)	23.1% (60)	19.2% (50)	13.1% (34)
I bribe my child at times to do things with large rewards	30.8% (80)	23.1% (60)	38.5% (100)	7.7% (20)

Source: Survey data (2015)

From the table above, it was evident that many of the parents accepted that they always avoid conflicts that cause a commotion with their children such that they always give in to the children's demands, as was noted by 27.7% of the parents who participated in the study, only 16.9% of them confirmed that they had never given in to their children demands. This implies that some parents give in to their children wishes when the children cause problems and they allow their children get away with their wishes. Similarly, Strage and Brandt (2010) study findings correlates with the above study by stating that permissive parents allow children to be self-regulated and free from rules or discipline. However, by not setting behavioral limits and goals and not holding children responsible for surpassing or falling short of those limits and goals, parents are failing to teach children that they are responsible for their own behavior. Likewise the study finding from the interview exerpt by a respondent stated that "*since am a single mother, I do not punish my child due to the fear that he might rebel against me and therefore give in for his demands.*" (Parent,21).

In fact, it emerged from the findings of the study that majority of the parents find it difficult to discipline their own children either at home or at school when the children require discipline. This was reflected by 27.7% of the parents who confirmed that they had never disciplined the children and 33.8% alluded that even if they do, it was very rare. The study findings concurs with Berger (2001) who asserted that permissive parents are inconsistent, disciplinarians, rewards bad behavior

regularly, children are not punished to obey guidelines and use minimal display. Similar findings from the interview excerpt from a respondent alluded that “*I fear disciplining my child because I do not have a partner to help me in this endeavor*” (Parent,14).

Strage and Brandit (2010) concurs that permissive parents allow children to be self-regulated and free from rules or discipline. However, by not setting behavioral limits and goals and not hold children responsible for surpassing or falling short of those limits and goals, parents are failing to teach children that they are responsible for their own behavior. Moreover, children and adolescents from permissive families are susceptible to antisocial peer pressure. Similarly, the study finding from the interview excerpt revealed that “*I do not have enough time to take charge of my children and therefore I do not have strong rules and regulations from my children to adhere to*” (Parent,10).

### **Evaluating the influence of parenting style on level of parental involvement in preschool learners’ education.**

To evaluate effect of parenting style on involvement in education, an inferential statistics was used to test a formulated hypothesis that “there is no statistically significant relationship between parenting style and level of involvement in preschool education”. Parents’ respondents were grouped into three dominant parenting styles (authoritative, authoritarian and permissive) according to their scores on responses on parenting style questionnaire. The parenting styles were used as the independent variable, while the scores on the parents level of involvement in education was used as the dependent variable. A one-way between-groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to explore this relationship. The table below shows group description for level of involvement in education scores got by each group.

#### **Group descriptions**

Parental Level of involvement

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Permissive	122	3.8052	.67219	.06086	3.6847	3.9256
Authoritative	79	4.1920	.41878	.04712	4.0982	4.2858
Authoritarian	59	3.5410	.62062	.08080	3.3793	3.7028
Total	260	3.8628	.63904	.03963	3.7847	3.9408

The table shows that parents who exhibited authoritative parenting style had higher mean of 4.19, in level of involvement in education than the other two groups. Authoritarian parents seemed to



involved the least in education of preschool learner with a mean of 3.54. The table below shows the SPSS one-way between-groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) output.

**Anova results on level of parental involvement against parenting style**

Parent Level of involvement in education

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	15.077	2	7.539	21.363	.000
Within Groups	90.692	257	.353		
Total	105.769	259			

The analysis shown in table revealed that there was a statistically significant difference (at the  $p < 0.05$  level) in parental involvement in preschool learners' education scores for the three parenting styles [F (2, 257) = 21.36,  $p < 0.05$ ]. Consequently, the Post-Hoc test was necessary to further find out which group was significantly different from the other group.

**Post Hoc Tests**

A look at the results of the post-hoc comparison using the Tukey HSD test was viable. The statistical significance differences between each pair of groups is provided in the table of multiple comparisons, which gives the results of the Post-Hoc tests

**Post Hoc Tests results**

**Multiple Comparisons**

Dependent Variable: Parent Level of involvement in education

	(I) Parenting Style	(J) Parenting Style	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Tukey HSD	Permissive	Authoritative	-.38686*	.08579	.000	-.5891	-.1846
		Authoritarian	.26415*	.09420	.015	.0421	.4862
	Authoritative	Permissive	.38686*	.08579	.000	.1846	.5891
		Authoritarian	.65101*	.10222	.000	.4100	.8920
	Authoritarian	Permissive	-.26415*	.09420	.015	-.4862	-.0421
		Authoritative	-.65101*	.10222	.000	-.8920	-.4100

\*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

In conclusion, it was revealed that there was indeed statistical significance difference ( $P < 0.05$ , in all cases) among the three parenting styles in regards to their level of involvement in education, with parents who exhibited authoritative parenting style personality likely to be more involved in



education than the other two groups. However, the parents who were authoritarian seemed to be involved the least in education of their preschool learners.

### **Conclusions**

The study findings revealed that authoritative parenting style had a positive involvement on the preschool learner education. The imposed and relaxed rule made it possible for the child to freely interact and share learning difficulties with the parent. This is in contrast to authoritarian and permissive parenting style which had no defined roles and let the child do as he/she wishes in educational attainment whose impact negatively affected educational outcomes.

### **Recommendation**

The study recommended that parents should come up with the best child rearing practices that enhances parental involvement in the education of preschool learner performance.

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