

A Correlational Analysis of Motherly Parenting Style and Children's Moral Development

Mahwish Safder¹

<https://doi.org/10.62345/jads.2024.13.2.26>

Abstract

The moral development of children is influenced by the way their parents act. Numerous studies have shown that parents can influence their children's moral and ethical development through their actions. As a result, we decided to conduct this investigation. Thus, the primary purpose of this research was to evaluate how maternal parenting styles affected the moral development of secondary school students. It was a mixed-method research approach, and the researcher used a survey method to conduct the study. All of the participants were secondary school students. One thousand two hundred thirty-nine secondary school pupils were included in the sample. The moral development of secondary school students was measured from an earlier questionnaire meant to probe mothers' perspectives on parenting. The findings indicated a substantial link between authoritarian and permissive parenting styles and the maturation of children's moral character. Based on the results, it was proposed that nurturing parents are better for their children's moral growth.

Keywords: Maternal Parenting Style, Moral Development.

Introduction

Parenting Individuals interrelate with the values of their society. The interaction of society and individuals is essential for societal development and the people. Morality is viewed as a superior foundation for continued development in literature. *Morality* is the principle that regulates the interactions and relationships among people within society. It is considered to recognize what is good and what is bad behaviour. It contains a variety of principles that people should follow and what they should or should not do in their society (Aybek et al., 2014).

Tan and Yasin (2020) state that since the morality of an individual starts emerging at an age, parents have a vital role in developing morality in their children. Moral development also reflects the value of parenting in moral socialization. Similarly, researchers stressed the importance of a positive and receptive parent-child relationship that encourages a child's respect towards parents (Augustine & Stifer, 2014). Family is considered a social institution, and it primarily influences how adolescents are developed. The family association has an intense impact on different phases of life (Coste, 2015). Several researchers reported that parenting is the primary moral effect within the family. Parental impact has been recognized as autonomy, involvement, care and structure. These influences have been assessed regarding the quality of communication, verbal interaction, and ego functioning. Parental collaboration with their children varies among relatives, as there is extensive variety in how parents deal with their children. Mostly, mothers have effects on the moral development of their children. The parenting style exhibits the emotional context where

¹Assistant Professor, Lahore Leads University. Email: drmahwish.edu@leads.edu.pk



parents want to attain their particular socialization goals, like valuing the norms and demanding maturity. Authoritarian parenting uses strict rules, requires obedience, offers an emotionless environment and is restricted to one-way communication. Though authoritative parents possess exact compliance and use strict rules, by using bidirectional communication, authoritative parents are different from authoritarian parents. Empirical evidence has shown different parenting styles (authoritarian, authoritative, indulgent). Bernardo (2014) Piaget and Kohlberg primarily propose the levels and stages of moral judgment. Piaget proposed autonomous morality, whereas Kohlberg proposed the stages of moral development (Turiel, 2018).

Review of Related Literature

Morality describes how one should be fair and not unfair to others and determines what is right and wrong (Ellemers et al., 2019). Morality is regarded as a concept related to cognition; it includes judgements, decisions regarding good and evil, and behaviour accordingly. Morality has three elements: cognition, emotion, and behaviour. The cognition element concerns decision-making and thinking processes regarding moral issues; emotions comprise feelings related to moral issues, and behaviour concerns how people behave (Zadanbeha & Zekerian, 2011).

An enormous literature on moral development mainly focuses on the theories of Piaget (1932) and Kohlberg (1976). According to Cam et al. (2012) in the light of the cognitive perspective, Piaget and Kohlberg approached moral development. Primarily, Piaget presented two stages of morality: heteronomous and autonomous.

One of the most known theories of moral development was proposed by Kohlberg. Kohlberg (1973) proposed three stages and six levels based on moral reasoning. The first level is pre-conventional, which has two stages: obedience and punishment orientation, and the second is self-orientation. The second stage is conventional, and it has a third and fourth level of moral development, which are called interpersonal accord and social order, respectively. Likewise, the conventional level is the third level, which comprises the fifth level, social orientation, and the sixth is universal ethical principles (Hazra & Mittal, 2018).

Morality contains the societal values that shape individuals in a way that they should have due regard to moral values (Aybek et al., 2014). According to White and Matawie (2004), parents are considered to have an influential role in their children's developing moral thoughts, which reveals the value of parents in teaching morality to their children (White & Matawie, 2004). Baumrind (1991) explained that family substantially influences the development of children's behaviours and their characters. Parenting comprises the sum of many particular behaviours that impact a child's behaviour (Bzostek & Berger, 2017). In order to control and socialize the children, the pattern of parenting is used to get variations in parents' attempts (Baumrind, 1991). Parenting is categorized by Baumrind (1967), who presented two facets: responsiveness and demand. These two dimensions have three parenting styles: authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive.

Objective of the Study

The objective of the study was to:

1. Determine the relationship between maternal parenting and the moral development of secondary school students.

Research Questions

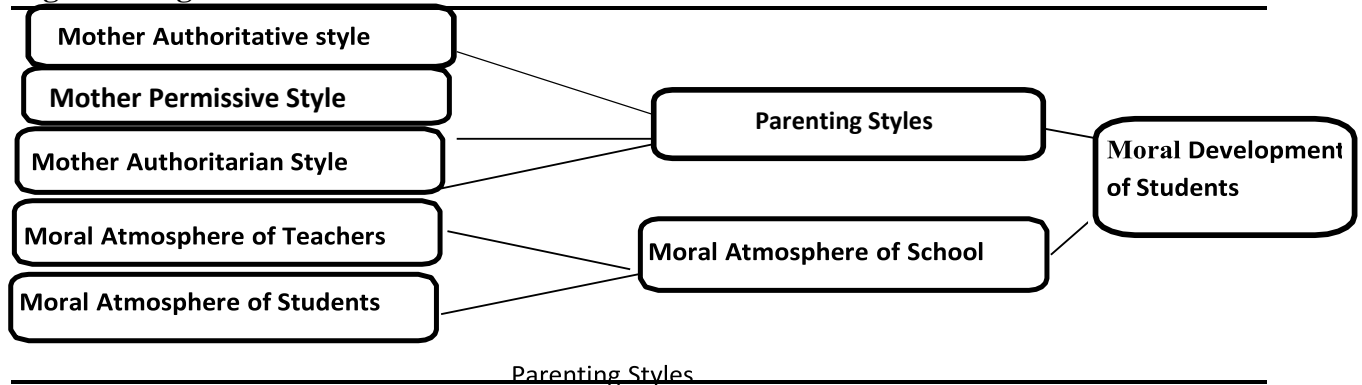
1. Is there a positive or negative correlation between authoritative mothers and the moral development of secondary school students?

2. Is there a positive and negative correlation between authoritarian mothers and the moral development of secondary school students?
3. Is there a positive and negative correlation between a permissive mother and the moral development of secondary school students?

Conceptual Framework

The relationship between parenting styles, moral atmosphere of school and moral development is based on the following conceptual framework.

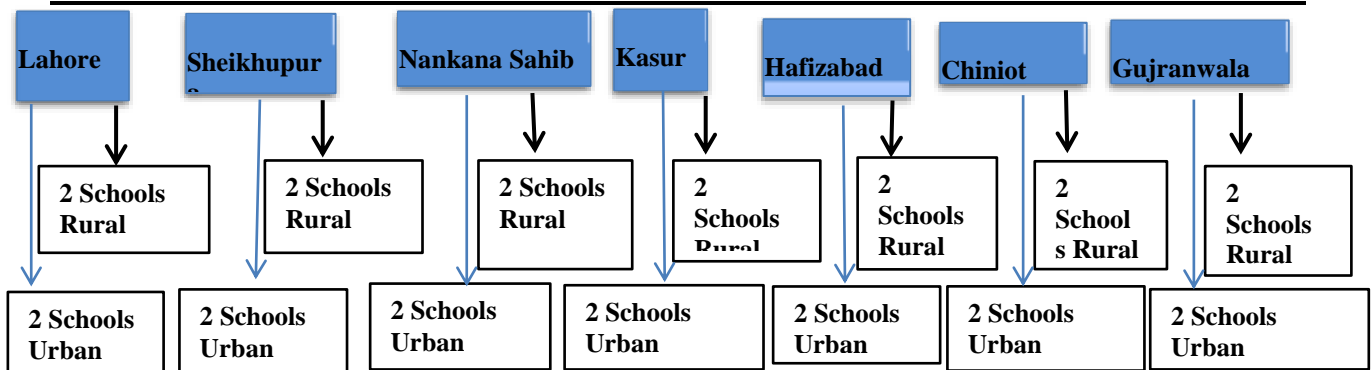
Figure 1: Figure



Methodology

Descriptive survey was used for data collection and it was correlational research by method. Descriptive survey was used to in a correlational study to gain the information population and variables. Multistage stratified sampling was used for data collection. Multistage sampling can balance the representative sample, increase the reliability and validity of findings. It enables the researcher to manage large population by breaking down the sampling procedure into stages. At first stage region wise distribution was followed for sampling. At second stage districts were selected from central region randomly. At third stage, researcher selected four schools (two rural and two urban) from each district randomly. Twelve hundred thirty nine students were nominated as the participants of study. Researcher distributed the questionnaires with the permission of heads of the schools. Total number of the schools was 28 (14x7).

Figure 2: Total number of the schools was 28 (14x7)



Instrument of the Study

Two instruments were used for data collection, one instrument was related to maternal parenting style and second instrument was used to measure moral development of students. Maternal parenting style questionnaire was used to assess three type of parenting styles; authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive parenting. Maternal parenting style questionnaire has been adapted by researcher and pilot test was implemented to ensure the reliability of parenting style scale and it was reported as .836 (Cronbach alpha).

Second instrument was comprised ten moral dilemmas to assess the moral development of students. Researcher adopted the scale of moral development from (Khanam, 2003) and its reliability was computed as .813 (Cronbach alpha)

Table 1: Explanation of Parenting Style Questionnaire, Scope and Number of Items

| Subscale of Parenting Style | Scope | No. of Items | Example of items |
|-----------------------------|---|--------------|---|
| Authoritative Mother | Capacity for verbal negotiation with young children Capacity to keep a warm and caring connection with their offspring Capacity to increase kids' involvement and participation in family | 8 | My mother is attentive to my emotions. My parents give me lectures on my good and bad habits. I am confident expressing my opinions to my parents. |
| Authoritarian Mother | Capacity to training the disciplinary style Capacity to maintain the children follow their commands Less warm relations with their children | 7 | My mother harshly enforce me to follow their directions If I violate the rules of my parents, they irritate me for a long period |
| Permissive Mother | Parents have less expectation from their children Parents endorse independent behavior in their children | 8 | My mother gave full freedom to me My parents provide me everything which I insist |

Table 2: Explanation of the School Moral Atmosphere Questionnaire, Scope and Number of Items

| Subscale of School Moral Atmosphere | Scope of | No. of Items | Example of items |
|-------------------------------------|--|--------------|---|
| Moral Atmosphere of Teachers | | | |
| Cooperation | Capacity to support the students in their problems | 4 | If any students face trouble, teachers cooperate them, If any student got hurt, teachers provide first aid to him/her. |
| Respect | Students feel harmless to express their feelings and enquire questions | 5 | Teachers gave permission to express their viewpoints |
| Advice | Ability to counsel and instruct the students | 5 | Teachers teach ethics to students |

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| Justice | Ability to be fair in all deeds | 2 | Teacher evaluate all the students fairly |
| Stringency | Quality of being strict to other | 2 | Techers castigate their students if they break rules |
| Moral Atmosphere of Students | | | |
| Truancy | Absence of students from school | 2 | Students often absent from the school |
| Cooperation | Ability to help and assist students | 4 | When any student does not comprehend the experience, other students support him/her |
| Respect | Ability to regard the teachers | 4 | Students honor their teachers |
| Stealing | Take another's prosperity | 2 | Students steal the property of other students |
| Teasing | To make fun of others | 2 | Students tease the new comers in school |
| Sabotage | Destruction the school's prosperity | 1 | Students destruction the schools prosperity |
| Violence | To combat with others | 2 | Students involve in fighting with others |
| Discipline | abide by a set of rules | 1 | Students follow rules and regulations of school |

Results

Table 3: Correlation between authoritative mother and moral development of secondary school students

| Variables | <i>N</i> | <i>r value</i> | <i>Sig.</i> |
|--|----------|----------------|-------------|
| Authoritative mother and moral development | 1239 | .107 | .035 |

Table 3 reflects Pearson correlation was employed to identify the relationship between authoritative parenting style of mother and moral development of students. The r-value indicates that there was a significant positive correlation $r=.107$ at $p=.035$ between mother's authoritative style and moral development of students. Eventually, it reflects that authoritative mother and their children's morality is positively correlated.

Table 4: Correlation between authoritarian mother and moral development of secondary school students

| Variables | <i>N</i> | <i>r value</i> | <i>Sig.</i> |
|--|----------|----------------|-------------|
| Authoritarian mother and moral development | 1239 | -.024 | .646 |

Table 4 indicates the correlation between authoritarian mother and moral development of secondary school students. The r-value reflects that there was a slight negative relationship $r= -.024$ at $p=.646$. between authoritarian mother and moral development of students. It is evident that there was a trivial negative association between authoritarian parenting style of mother and students' morality.

Table 5: Correlation between mother permissive style of mother and moral development of students

| Variables | <i>N</i> | <i>r value</i> | <i>Sig.</i> |
|---|----------|----------------|-------------|
| Permissive mother and moral development | 1239 | .102 | .046 |

Table 5 reveals that correlation was employed to explore the relationship between mother's permissive parenting and moral development of students. The *r*-value reflects that there was significant positive relationship $r=.102$ at $p=.046$ between both permissive mode of parenting and students' moral development. It appears that there was relationship exist between permissive parenting mother and moral development of students.

Table 6: Post hoc Expressive of Moral Development of Students based on their Mother's Education Tukey HSD

| Multiple Comparisons | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|------------|-------|-------------------------|-------------|
| Dependent Variable: MDTotal | | | | | | |
| Tukey HSD | | | | | | |
| (I) Education | (J) Education | Mean Difference (I-J) | Std. Error | Sig. | 95% Confidence Interval | |
| | | | | | Lower Bound | Upper Bound |
| Illiterate | Primary | .177 | .343 | .999 | -.85 | 1.23 |
| | Middle | .201 | .402 | .995 | -.92 | 1.52 |
| | Matric | -.132 | .343 | 1.000 | -1.17 | .91 |
| | Intermediate | -.029 | .565 | 1.000 | -1.75 | 1.68 |
| | Bachelors | 2.333* | .689 | .025 | .15 | 4.34 |
| | Masters | -.553 | .995 | .997 | -3.70 | 2.34 |
| | Professional | 6.627 | 2.184 | .185 | -1.11 | 12.15 |
| Primary | Illiterate | -.177 | .343 | .999 | -1.23 | .85 |
| | Middle | .121 | .435 | 1.000 | -1.21 | 1.43 |
| | Matric | -.326 | .382 | .991 | -1.48 | .84 |
| | Intermediate | -.324 | .589 | 1.000 | -2.01 | 1.57 |
| | Bachelors | 3.066 | .709 | .073 | -.10 | 4.21 |
| | Masters | -.783 | 1.009 | .989 | -3.93 | 2.19 |
| | Professional | 6.248 | 2.190 | .226 | -1.32 | 11.98 |
| Middle | Illiterate | -.401 | .402 | .995 | -1.52 | .92 |
| | Primary | -.213 | .435 | 1.000 | -1.43 | 1.21 |
| | Matric | -.543 | .435 | .977 | -1.75 | .89 |
| | Intermediate | -.324 | .625 | .999 | -2.23 | 1.56 |
| | Bachelors | 2.842 | .739 | .146 | -.30 | 4.19 |
| | Masters | -.984 | 1.030 | .980 | -4.11 | 2.14 |
| | Professional | 6.317 | 2.200 | .257 | -1.46 | 11.90 |
| Matric | Illiterate | .214 | .343 | 1.000 | -.91 | 1.17 |
| | Primary | .317 | .382 | .991 | -.84 | 1.48 |
| | Middle | .429 | .435 | .977 | -.89 | 1.75 |

| | | | | | | |
|--------------|--------------|---------|-------|-------|--------|-------|
| | Intermediate | .094 | .589 | 1.000 | -1.69 | 1.88 |
| | Bachelors | 2.372* | .709 | .019 | .22 | 4.52 |
| | Masters | -.555 | 1.009 | .999 | -3.62 | 2.51 |
| | Professional | 5.645 | 2.190 | .165 | -1.00 | 12.29 |
| Intermediate | Illiterate | .034 | .565 | 1.000 | -1.68 | 1.75 |
| | Primary | .223 | .589 | 1.000 | -1.57 | 2.01 |
| | Middle | .335 | .625 | .999 | -1.56 | 2.23 |
| | Matric | -.084 | .589 | 1.000 | -1.88 | 1.69 |
| | bachelors | 2.365 | .839 | .119 | -.27 | 4.82 |
| | Masters | -.649 | 1.104 | .999 | -4.00 | 2.70 |
| | Professional | 5.551 | 2.235 | .204 | -1.24 | 12.34 |
| Bachelors | Illiterate | -2.244* | .689 | .025 | -4.34 | -.15 |
| | Primary | -2.055 | .709 | .073 | -4.21 | .10 |
| | Middle | -1.943 | .739 | .146 | -4.19 | .30 |
| | Matric | -2.372* | .709 | .019 | -4.52 | -.22 |
| | Intermediate | -3.267 | .748 | .119 | -4.82 | .27 |
| | Masters | -3.838 | 1.172 | .197 | -6.49 | .63 |
| | Professional | 3.273 | 2.270 | .838 | -3.62 | 10.16 |
| Master | Illiterate | .874 | 1.876 | .997 | -2.34 | 3.70 |
| | Primary | .765 | 2.333 | .989 | -2.19 | 3.93 |
| | Middle | .895 | 2.121 | .980 | -2.14 | 4.11 |
| | Matric | .666 | 2.111 | .999 | -2.51 | 3.62 |
| | Intermediate | .649 | 1.104 | .999 | -2.70 | 4.00 |
| | Bachelors | 3.838 | 2.163 | .197 | -.63 | 6.49 |
| | Professional | 7.300 | 3.291 | .155 | -1.03 | 13.43 |
| Professional | Illiterate | -6.617 | 3.175 | .185 | -12.15 | 1.11 |
| | Primary | -6.438 | 3.180 | .226 | -11.98 | 1.32 |
| | Middle | -4.317 | 3.311 | .257 | -11.90 | 1.46 |
| | Matric | -6.554 | 3.280 | .165 | -12.29 | 1.00 |
| | Intermediate | -6.661 | 3.246 | .204 | -12.34 | 1.24 |
| | Bachelors | -4.364 | 3.260 | .838 | -10.16 | 3.62 |
| | Masters | -5.300 | 3.271 | .155 | -13.43 | 1.03 |

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

Table 6 shows that a Post hoc comparison using the Tukey HSD test shows that mothers' Bachelor's degrees were more associated with the moral development of their children.

Discussion

The research explored the relationship between mothers' parenting style and moral development in secondary school students. The result presented that a relationship exists between a mother's parenting style and the moral development of secondary school students. The findings are consistent with Hawkin (2005), who said that authoritative and permissive parenting styles significantly affect moral judgment. In contrast, Alizadeh et al. (2011) reported that authoritarian parents are demanding and they are less responsive. As a result, their strictness may cause behavioural issues in their children. Abad et al. (2013) found a significant positive relationship

between authoritative parenting style and morality. According to Ebrahimi et al. (2015), authoritative parenting was the best. The findings are consistent with Sarwar's (2016) findings that an authoritative parenting style is effective for child development. According to Carlo et al. (2011), a mother's friendliness is more extrapolative of moral behaviour than the warm behaviour of a father. In addition, the conclusions align with Hawkins (2005), who states that there is no relationship between the authoritarian parenting style and moral judgment. Authoritative parenting encompasses supportive behaviour, clear limitations and warmth and builds an environment where children feel safe and secure. It motivates children to adopt moral principles and values.

Children in authoritative homes often show strong empathy, ethical behaviour, and social obligations. Personal interaction with such children indicates their ability to show respect for others and exhibit moral reasoning. This study's analytical aspect was that authoritative parenting supports emotional and cognitive development, which is indispensable for moral reasoning and judgement. Previous studies have shown that an authoritative way of parenting promotes self-regulation and autonomy.

Conclusion

Based on findings and results, authoritative and permissive maternal parenting styles substantially positively affect adolescents' moral development. From this perspective, authoritative and permissive parenting are considered more effective parenting styles in children's moral development. Authoritative and permissive parenting have responsiveness dimensions that may shape their children's morality. It is also concluded that there is a negative relationship between authoritarian parenting and moral development.

Conceptually, authoritarian parenting is highly demanding, so parents use punitive manners to develop their children. As a result, strict parenting causes behavioural problems in children.

Recommendations

The study recommends that parents gain an awareness of parenting styles and the various consequences of different parenting styles on the development of children's morality. In order to develop morality in children, parents should use a warm approach to parenting. They should not show excessive strictness over their children, which may cause distance between parents and their children, and, as a result, they may try to commit immoral activities. By using authoritative and permissive parenting styles, parents can improve the moral behaviour of their children.

References

- Abad S. T. R., Taheri, A. M., & Yakhdani, M. H. F. (2013). Investigating the relationship of parenting styles with creativity and moral development in male preschoolers in Yazd city. *PelagiaResearch Library European Journal of Experimental Biology*, 3(5), 605-608.
- Alizadeh, S., Abu-Talib, M., Abdullah, R., & Mansoor, M. (2011). Relationship between parenting style and children's behavioural problems. *Asian Social Science*, 7(12). 195-200.
- Augustine, M., E. & Stifer, C., A. (2014). Temperament, Parenting, and Moral Development: Specificity of Behavior and Context. *Social Development*, 24(2), 285-303.
- Aybek, E. C., Çavdara, D., & Özabacı, T. M. N. (2014). University Students' Moral Judgment and Emotional Intelligence Level: A model Testing, *Social and Behavioral Sciences* 19, 2740 – 2746.
- Bernardo, L. L. A. (2014). *The influence of parenting styles on the family relationships of lesbians and gay men*. Retrieved from <http://udr.slu.edu.ph:8080/jspui/handle/123456789/269>

- Baumrind, D. (1967). Child care practices anteceding three patterns of preschool behavior. *Genetic Psychology Monographs*, 75(1), 43–88.
- Baumrind, D. (1991). The influence of parenting style on adolescent competence and substance use. *Journal of Early Adolescence*, 11(1), 56-95.
- Bzostek, S. H., & Berger, L. M. (2017). Family Structure Experiences and Child Socioemotional Development During the First Nine Years of Life: Examining Heterogeneity by Family Structure at Birth. *Demography*, 54(2), 513–540. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13524-017-0563-5>
- Cam, Z., Seydoogullari, S., Cavdar, D., & Cok, F. (2012). Classical and contemporary approaches for moral development. *Educational Sciences: Theory and Practice*, 12(2), 1222-1225
- Coste, B. (2015). *Positive parenting: Practicle advice and deep insights*. Retrieved from <http://www.positive-parenting-ally.com/3-parenting-styles.htm>
- Ebrahimi, M., Kharbou, A., Ahadi, H., & Hatami, H. (2015). The comparison of emotional self-regulation of students in different parenting styles. *Indian Journal of Fundamental and Applied Life Sciences*, 5(2). 1146-1152.
- Ellemers, N., Van der Toorn, J., Paunov, Y. Leeuwen, T. V. (2019). The Psychology of Morality: A Review and Analysis of Empirical Studies Published From 1940 Through 2017, *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 23(4), 332-366.
- Hawkins, S. M. (2005). *The influence of parenting styles on the development of moral judgment in college level adolescents* (Doctoral dissertation). Liberty University, Lynchburg.
- Hazra, S., & Mittal, (2018). Role of Parenting in Moral Development: An Overview. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 6(2), DIP: 18.01.057/20180602, DOI: 10.25215/0602.057
- Host, H., Brugman, D., Tavecchio, L., & Beem, L. (1998). Students' perception of the moral atmosphere in secondary school and the relationship between moral competence and moral atmosphere, *Journal of Moral Education*, 27(1), 47-70.
- Khanam, A. (2008). *Effect of religious education on the moral development of children* (Doctoral dissertation). Institute of Education and Research, University of the Punjab.
- Kohlberg, L. (1973). Stages and aging in moral development: Some speculations. *The Gerontologist*, 13(4), 497–502. <https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/13.4.497>
- Sarwar, S. (2016). Influence of parenting style on children's behavior. *Journal of Education and Educational Development*, 3(2), 222-249.
- Tan, W. N., & Yasin, M. (2020). Parents' Roles and Parenting Styles on Shaping Children's Morality. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, 8(3C), 70-76.
- Turiel, E. (2018). Moral development in the early years: when and how, *Human Development*, 61, 297-308.
- White, F. & Matawie, K. M. (2004). Parental Morality and Family Processes as Predictors of Adolescent Morality. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 13(2), 219-233.
- Zadanbeha, M. K., & Zekerian, M. (2011). A comparison of moral competence between Iranian male and female elementary students. *Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 30, 48 – 52.