



Parenting Styles as Predictors of Mental Well-Being among Adolescents in Ogun State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Adolescence is a phase of development marked by significant physical, emotional and cognitive changes. During this time, the family environment plays a central role. This paper therefore examined how parental styles predict mental well-being among adolescents in Ogun State, Nigeria, using the survey research design. A sample of 347 adolescents was selected through the multi-stage sampling technique. Instruments used for data collection were the Parenting Styles and Dimensions Questionnaire (PSDQ) and Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS). Two hypotheses were formulated and tested by means of the multiple regression analysis at the .05 level of significance. Results revealed a significant combined influence of parenting styles on the mental well-being ($F_{(4,342)} = 15.413, p < .0005$), significant relative positive influences of authoritative ($\beta = .207, t = 13.106, p < .0005$), authoritarian ($\beta = .185, t = 10.621, p < .0005$) and indulgent ($\beta = .138, t = 8.273, p < .0005$) parenting styles on the mental well-being and a significant negative influence of neglectful parenting style ($\beta = -.115, t = 5.462, p < .0005$), significant relationships between authoritative parenting style and mental well-being ($r = .207, p < .05$), authoritarian parenting style and mental well-being ($r = .185, p < .05$), indulgent parenting style and mental well-being ($r = .138, p < .05$) and neglectful parenting style and mental well-being ($r = -.115, p < .05$). It was subsequently recommended, among other things, that educational programmes and workshops should be organized to promote authoritative parenting style.

Keywords: Parenting styles, mental well-being, adolescents.

1. Introduction

Adolescence is a phase of development marked by significant physical, emotional and cognitive changes. During this time, the family environment plays a central role, with parenting styles being a critical factor influencing the mental well-being of adolescents. Mental well-being encompasses an individual's ability to realize their potential, cope with daily stressors and contribute meaningfully to society (World Health Organization, 2021). Research highlights the impact of parenting styles on various aspects of adolescent mental health, including emotional stability, social adjustment and academic performance (Bakker, Ormel, Verhulst, & Oldehinkel, 2020).

Parenting styles, classified as authoritative, authoritarian, indulgent and neglectful, differ in responsiveness and demands. Authoritative parenting, characterized by warmth and reasonable control, is linked to positive outcomes, including high self-esteem and lower anxiety levels (McLeod, 2019). Conversely, authoritarian and neglectful parenting styles are often associated with poor mental health outcomes such as depression and academic struggles (García & Gracia, 2021). These effects, however, may vary due to

individual and cultural differences, emphasizing the need to explore these factors within specific populations (Kagiticbasi, 2020).

In Nigeria, particularly in Ogun State, research on parenting styles and adolescent mental well-being remains scarce (Atilola, 2021). Cultural norms and societal practices in Ogun State influence parenting methods, potentially leading to unique outcomes for adolescents. This highlights the importance of studying these relationships to better understand and address mental health challenges among adolescents in the region. Schools, where adolescents spend a significant portion of their time, also play a role in shaping mental well-being, making it essential to explore how family and school environments intersect (Bello, Onunkun, & Uwanna, 2021). This study seeks to examine the influence of parenting styles on the mental well-being of adolescents in Ogun State. By addressing gaps in local research, it aims to inform the development of policies and interventions that promote positive parenting and mental health among adolescents. Findings from this study could contribute to educational programmes and community strategies tailored to the needs of adolescents, fostering better mental health outcomes in the region.

Parenting styles significantly influence adolescents' mental well-being, shaping their emotional stability, social relationships and academic outcomes. Despite the global relevance of this topic, there is limited

Oyinlola, J. D., (2025). Parenting Styles as Predictors of Mental Well-Being among Adolescents in Ogun State, Nigeria. *Journal of Specialised and Professional Education (JOSPED)*, SP: Nov, 2025, pp. 7-11.

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research exploring these associations within the specific cultural and societal settings of Nigeria, particularly in Ogun State. Given the unique socio-cultural practices that may affect parenting and adolescent outcomes, this study is essential for identifying locally relevant strategies to promote mental health. By examining parenting styles as predictors of mental well-being, this paper aims to provide evidence-based recommendations for fostering healthier family dynamics and improved adolescent outcomes.

1.1 Objectives

The objectives of the study therefore are:

1. To examine the influence of parenting styles on the mental well-being among adolescents in Ogun State, and
2. to investigate the relationship between parenting styles and adolescent mental well-being.
- 3.

1.2 Hypotheses

H₀1. There is no significant influence of parenting styles on the mental well-being among adolescents in Ogun State.

H₀2. There is no significant relationship between parenting styles and mental well-being among adolescents in Ogun State.

2. Methods

2.1 Design and Participants

The paper employed a survey research design to explore the influence of parenting styles on the mental well-being of adolescents and the relationship between the two variables. This design was chosen to identify patterns and associations without manipulating variables, making it suitable for examining naturally occurring relationships in a population. The target population included adolescents aged 13–19 years attending secondary schools in Ogun State, Nigeria. This group was selected because they represent the developmental phase of adolescence, which is central to the study.

A sample of 360 adolescents as participants was selected through the multi-stage sampling technique. First, Ogun State was divided into its three senatorial districts: Ogun Central, Ogun East and Ogun West. From each district, two local government areas (LGAs) were randomly selected. Next, two secondary schools were selected from each LGA using a stratified random sampling method, ensuring representation of public and private schools. Finally, 30 students were randomly selected from each school, resulting in a total sample size of 360 adolescents.

2.2 Research Instruments

Data were collected using the following two standardized questionnaires:

1. *Parenting Styles and Dimensions Questionnaire (PSDQ)*

This instrument was developed by Robinson, Mandleco, Olsen, and Hart (1995) to measure adolescents' perceptions of their parents' parenting styles (authoritative, authoritarian, indulgent and neglectful). The PSDQ was formatted as a 5-point Likert-type instrument with responses ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. Sample items on the scale are:

- 1.1 *encourage my child to talk about his/her feelings. (Authoritative).*
- 2.1 *punish my child by taking away privileges with little discussion. (Authoritarian)*

The PSDQ has demonstrated strong internal consistency across its sub-scales: Authoritative, Authoritarian and Permissive parenting styles. The instrument's reliability has been confirmed in various populations, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging between 0.73 and 0.91 for its subscales. Its validity has been supported through correlations with observed parenting behaviors and child outcomes, affirming its utility in psychological and educational research.

2. *Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS)*

This scale was developed by Tennant et al. (2007) to assess the mental well-being of adolescents. The WEMWBS was formatted as a 5-point Likert-type instrument with responses ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. Sample items on the scale are:

1. *I have been feeling optimistic about the future*
2. *I have been feeling useful*

The WEMWBS has shown excellent internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha typically exceeding .90 in various studies. Its construct validity has been demonstrated through correlations with measures of mental health and subjective well-being, as well as its ability to differentiate between groups with varying levels of mental well-being. Test-retest reliability scores have been reported to be strong, indicating stability over time.

2.3 Method of Data Collection

Permission was obtained from school authorities before administering the questionnaires. Trained research assistants distributed the instruments to participants during school hours. The purpose of the study was explained, and participants were assured of confidentiality. Each participant completed the questionnaire independently under supervision to minimize influence and ensure accurate responses.

2.4 Method of Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using inferential statistics, specifically multiple regression analysis and Pearson's correlation, to examine the predictive power of parenting styles on adolescents' mental well-being and

Table 1a: Model Summary and Coefficients of the Multiple Regression Analysis for the Combined Influence of Parenting Styles on Mental Well-Being

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	14552.288	4	3638.072	15.413	.000
Residual	80726.022	342	236.041		
Total	95278.310	346			

Model Summary: R = .581, R² = .338, Adj. R² = .331, Std. Error = 4.05073

Dependent Variable: Mental Well-Being

Table 1b: Coefficients of the Multiple Regression Analysis for the Relative Influence of Parenting Styles on Mental Well-Being

	B	Std Error	β	t	Sig.
(Constant)	7.953	4.730		19.420	.000
Authoritative	.148	.058	.207	13.106	.000
Authoritarian	.105	.038	.185	10.621	.000
Indulgent	.107	.074	.138	8.273	.000
Neglectful	-.094	.103	.115	-5.462	.000

Dependent Variable: Mental Well-Being

Table 2: Correlation Matrix for the Relationships between Parenting Styles and Mental Well-Being

	Authoritative	Authoritarian	Indulgent	Neglectful	Mental Well-Being
Authoritative	1.000	.156*	-.105*	-.173*	.207*
Authoritarian		1.000	-.216*	-.221*	.185*
Indulgent			1.000	.173*	.138*
Neglectful				1.000	-.115*
Mental Well-Being					1.000

*Correlation is significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)

the relationships between each parental style and mental well-being. The analysis was conducted using SPSS software, version 27. The significance level was set at .05.

2.5 Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval for the study was given by the Directorate of Research and External Relations (DRER) at Tai Solarin Federal University of Education, Ijagun, and all procedures were completed in compliance with the ethical standards. Informed consent was obtained from the participants. Participation was voluntary, and participants could withdraw at any time without consequences. Data confidentiality was maintained by anonymizing responses and securely storing collected data.

3. Results

3.1 Hypothesis One

There is no significant influence of parenting styles on the mental well-being among adolescents in Ogun State.

Table 1a revealed significant results ($F_{(4,342)} = 15.413$, $p < .0005$). The null hypothesis is therefore rejected while the alternative hypothesis is upheld. It is subsequently concluded that there is a significant combined influence of parenting styles on the mental well-being among adolescents in Ogun State. Table 1 further revealed that the predictor variables

(authoritative, authoritarian, indulgent and neglectful parenting styles) jointly accounted for 33.1% of the variance in mental well-being (Adj. R² = .331).

Table 1b revealed significant relative results. There were significant relative positive influences of authoritative parenting style ($\beta = .207$, $t = 13.106$, $p < .0005$), authoritarian parenting style ($\beta = .185$, $t = 10.621$, $p < .0005$) and indulgent parenting style ($\beta = .138$, $t = 8.273$, $p < .0005$) on the mental well-being among adolescents in Ogun State, and there was a significant negative influence of neglectful parenting style ($\beta = -.115$, $t = 5.462$, $p < .0005$). Table 1b showed that authoritative parenting style had the strongest influence on mental well-being, followed by authoritarian, indulgent and neglectful parenting styles.

3.2 Hypothesis Two

There is no significant relationship between parenting styles and mental well-being among adolescents in Ogun State.

Table 2 revealed significant results. Specifically, there were significant positive relationships between authoritative parenting style and mental well-being ($r = .207$, $p < .05$), authoritarian parenting style and mental well-being ($r = .185$, $p < .05$) and indulgent parenting style and mental well-being ($r = .138$, $p < .05$). However, there was a significant negative relationship between neglectful parenting style and mental well-

being ($r = -.115, p < .05$).

4. Discussion

The results of this study provide valuable evidence regarding the influence of parenting styles on the mental well-being of adolescents in Ogun State, Nigeria. The findings highlight both the collective and individual influences of various parenting approaches, emphasizing their significance in shaping mental health outcomes. The analysis demonstrated that parenting styles collectively accounted for a significant proportion of the variance in adolescent mental well-being, with the predictors explaining 33.1% of the observed differences. This result supports the conclusion that the family environment, as defined by parenting behaviours, plays a substantial role in shaping the emotional and psychological health of adolescents. The statistical significance of the regression model underscores the importance of examining these variables together to understand their impact more effectively.

The relative influence of individual parenting styles revealed both positive and negative effects on mental well-being: Adolescents raised with authoritative parenting experienced the highest levels of mental well-being. The positive relationship ($\beta = .207, p < .0005$) suggests that this style, characterized by high levels of warmth and reasonable control, fosters an environment conducive to healthy emotional and psychological development. The supportive nature of this approach likely helps adolescents develop confidence, effective coping mechanisms and strong social connections. The authoritarian style was also positively associated with mental well-being, though to a lesser extent ($\beta = .185, p < .0005$). This finding may be attributed to the structured and disciplined environment provided by this parenting approach, which can offer adolescents a sense of stability. However, the benefits of authoritarian parenting might depend on how adolescents perceive the discipline; whether it is seen as supportive or overly harsh.

Indulgent parenting showed a weaker but still significant positive influence on mental well-being ($\beta = .138, p < .0005$). The emphasis on responsiveness and leniency might contribute to an adolescent's sense of autonomy and self-worth. However, the absence of firm boundaries may limit the overall effectiveness of this style in promoting optimal mental health outcomes. Neglectful parenting had a significant negative impact on mental well-being ($\beta = -.115, p < .0005$). Adolescents exposed to this style often lack the emotional support and guidance necessary for healthy development, which can lead to feelings of isolation, low self-esteem, and increased vulnerability to mental health challenges.

The correlation analysis further corroborated the regression findings. Positive relationships were observed between mental well-being and authoritative, authoritarian, and indulgent parenting styles, while a

negative relationship was found with neglectful parenting. These relationships indicate that parenting styles directly influence adolescents' ability to manage stress, build resilience and maintain emotional stability.

5. Recommendation

The following recommendations were subsequently made:

1. Educational programmes and workshops should be organized to promote authoritative parenting style. These workshops could help parents understand how to balance warmth and control, set reasonable boundaries and provide emotional support. Counseling programmes could also be implemented to assist parents struggling with authoritarian, indulgent or neglectful styles to adopt more effective parenting strategies.
2. Schools in Ogun State can serve as a platform for fostering better parenting practices. By incorporating regular parent-teacher forums and seminars, schools can educate parents on the link between parenting styles and adolescent mental health. Schools can also offer resources like parenting guides, expert talks and support groups to encourage positive family interactions that bolster adolescent mental well-being.
3. Community-based initiatives, such as family support centres, can be established to provide resources for parents, especially those showing tendencies toward neglectful parenting. These centres can offer workshops, mentorship programmes and access to child psychologists or counsellors. Empowering parents within their local communities can foster a collaborative approach to improving mental well-being.

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