



# Challenges In Practicing Authoritative Parenting: A Qualitative Study

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**Abstract:** Parenting plays a very important role in shaping child's psychological behaviour and emotional development. In developmental psychology, various types of parenting styles have been recognised. Among them, authoritative parenting style is being identified as most supportive parenting style. Despite, authoritative parenting style has been widely acknowledged by the parents, they experience practical difficulties in implementing authoritative parenting style consistently in their daily life. This study is to understand the challenges faced by the parents in contemporary family context while practicing authoritative parenting. Qualitative research has been done to understand in depth lived experience of the parents in their parenting journey through a semi structured interview method. Data is thematically analyzed to understand recurring pattern of challenges with respect to time constraints due to personal and professional life conflict, managing emotional regulation, difficulties in balancing warmth and behavioral control, and inconsistency in maintaining discipline. The study suggests although parents are aware about the importance of authoritative parenting due to external and internal stressors it creates a gap between parental ideal and actual parenting. It is very important to understand these challenges to develop counselling interventions, parent training programs, family support system for promoting effective parenting strategies and build a strong parent child relationship.

**Keywords:** Parental challenges, Authoritative Parenting, Emotional Regulation, Parental Stressors, Qualitative Research, Parent Child Interaction, Child development.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Parenting plays most crucial role in shaping the psychological development of the child. Parenting is all about the kind of environment a parent creates with respect to attitude, behaviour and emotion when raising a child. Developmental psychology explains parenting includes giving behavioural guidance, promoting autonomy and providing emotional support to the child. Baumrind (1971) has classified parenting into three types authoritative parenting, authoritarian parenting and permissive parenting. Maccoby and Martin (1983) classified parenting based on the demandingness and dimension of responsiveness and included one more style of parenting as neglectful parenting. Authoritative parenting is about maintaining a balance between warmth and firm behavioural expectations. The children brought up under this parenting style have shown high self-esteem, greater emotional competency and better academic performance. In this contemporary context, modern parents face challenges in maintaining consistency in practice of authoritative parenting. This study aims to understand the real-life challenges faced by the parents while practicing authoritative parenting.

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In developmental psychology, much research has been done on parenting styles. Baumrind introduced authoritative parenting as a practice which balance warmth and behavioral control helps to promote independence and social competence in children, Effect of authoritative parenting control on children's behavior((Baumarind,1966). On her further research she reported that the children brought up under authoritative parenting style had better psychological adjustments and strong emotional regulation when compared to those brought up under authoritarian and permissive parenting style, Current patterns of parental authority (Baumarind,1971). Maccoby and Martin introduced the key dimension for classification was responsiveness and demandingness, Socialization in the context of the family Parent-child interaction (Maccoby and Martin, 1983). Steinberg et al. added adolescents bought up under authoritative parenting had better psychological wellbeing and academic performance Authoritative parenting and adolescent adjustment (Steinberg et al.,1989). Child Development. Morris's study highlighted the role of parent's emotional regulation in shaping children's emotional wellbeing The rule of the family context in the emotional regulation. Social Development (Morris ,2007). Eisenberg's study demonstrated children's emotional regulation was influenced by parenting style and their social competence Parenting and children's emotional regulation. Psychological injury. (Eisenberg, 1998). Verma S & Sharma D highlighted adolescents raised under authoritative parenting style showed higher emotional intelligence and lower level of stress Parenting style and emotional competence among Indian adolescents. Journal of Indian Psychology (Verma S & Sharma D, 2008). Yap M B H (2025) mentioned emotional regulation highly effected authoritative parenting on adolescents' wellbeing Parenting and emotional health. Journal of Affective Disorders (Yap M B H, 2023) ,which supported his previous study Maternal socialization of positive effect. The impact of parenting style on adolescent emotion regulation and depression. Journal of Adolescence (Yap M B H ,2018) saying authoritative parenting was associated with lower adolescents' depression. Many Indian studies also highlighted similar patterns of positive impact of authoritative parenting on kids. All these studies suggest that authoritative parenting has a positive influence on emotional wellbeing of children and helps in lower stress level in adolescents.

## III. METHODOLOGY

This study is qualitative exploratory study to explore the lived experience of the parents practicing authoritative parenting style through qualitative research design. Only authoritative practicing parents were selected through purposive sampling techniques as study samples. Data was collected through semi structured interview methods. Which allowed participants to freely express their perceptions, experience and challenges facing during parenting practice. Thematic analysis of the data collected was done to analyze repetitive patterns of challenges faced by the parents during parenting practice.

### 3.1 Research Objective

To assess the challenges faced by the parents in practicing authoritative parenting style using semi structured interview method.

### 3.2 Research Design

An exploratory design was considered for this study aim to gain in depth understanding of parents' subjective experiences difficulties, perceptions, associated with implementing authoritative parenting in real life.

Data was collected using semi structured interview method. Initially a predetermined thematic area was explored with flexibility to probe emerging issues relevant to research questions. This design enabled rich collection of detailed grounded data directly from the parents who reported of practicing authoritative parenting.

In this purposive sampling technique was used to select the parents to meet the inclusive criterion for the study. The qualitative data obtained during the study was analyzed using a thematic analysis to identify categories, interpret recurring patterns and themes related to the challenges faced by the parents while practicing authoritative parenting.

A qualitative exploratory research design was chosen to align the objective and research question of the study. Also to ensure comprehensive understanding of the study

### 3.3 Sample design

Present study adopted purposive sampling techniques. An inclusive and exclusive criteria were set, and participants were selected as per the requirement to fulfil the objective of the research. After detail analysis, seven parents were selected for the study. These participants were the residents of Singasandra, Bangalore. The parents were identified as the authoritative parenting style parents and whose children were between the age group 5 to 10 years. Social demographic details were selected, and preliminary interaction was done to identify their parenting practice. A qualitative study was chosen to get in-depth insights from parents regarding the challenges experienced by parents while practicing authoritative parenting.

### 3.4 Sample size

Sample for this study consisted of seven parents whose children aged between 5 to 10 years. Initial screening was done by collecting the socio demographic details and a preliminary interaction was done to identify the participants practicing authoritative parenting style. Only one parent from each family was included to obtain their individual perception. These parents were selected from the urban background who shared similar developmental concerns related to middle childhood. This sample enabled us to understand the in-depth qualitative exploration of parenting challenges in specific developmental stage.

#### 3.4.1 Inclusive Criteria

- Parents were identified as practicing authoritative parenting style.
- Parents of children who are between 5 to 10 years.
- Parents residing in Singasandra, Bangalore.
- Parents were willing to participate in this study and have provided informed consent.
- Parents were able to communicate their experience clearly during the interview method.

#### 3.4.2 Exclusive criteria

- Parents were practicing permissive, authoritarian and neglecting parenting styles.
- Parents of children who are below 5 years are above 10 years of age.
- Parents who are residing in rural area and has different cultural backgrounds.
- Parents residing other than Singasandra, Bangalore.
- Parents were not comfortable sharing their experience and unwilling to participate in the study.

## IV. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Thematic analysis of the qualitative data collected during the interview method was done to identify the recurring pattern that reveals the challenges faced by the parents during parenting practice in this contemporary lifestyle

During the interview with the parents, major themes were identified as perceived during parenting practice. Emotional regulation challenges, difficulties in maintaining consistency and discipline, time management and role strain; influence of the extended family, motivation for change and parents-child attachment and preference. These were the challenges identified through parents in their parenting practice. Emotional regulation challenges such as parents found it difficult to manage their anger and frustration at times when their child behaved inappropriately (Eisenberg Net al, 1998). Difficulties in maintaining consistency and discipline, time management during the demanding work schedule which affects the family time and interaction with the children building up stress and fatigue among parents (Belsky J,1984). Role strain issue when single parent had to take all the responsibilities without any family support leading to physical and mental exhaustion (Abidin R R,1992). Interference from extended family members also caused difficulties in monitoring children and simultaneously maintaining their autonomy (Kagitcihasi C,1996). Overall, the study revealed that some external or internal stressors interfered with the parent's ideal and real-life parenting practice. These external and internal stressors are the challenges identified by the parents, which inhibit them from practicing authoritative parenting consistently although they are aware of its positive impact on the child's development.

### Parenting Dynamics and Challenges

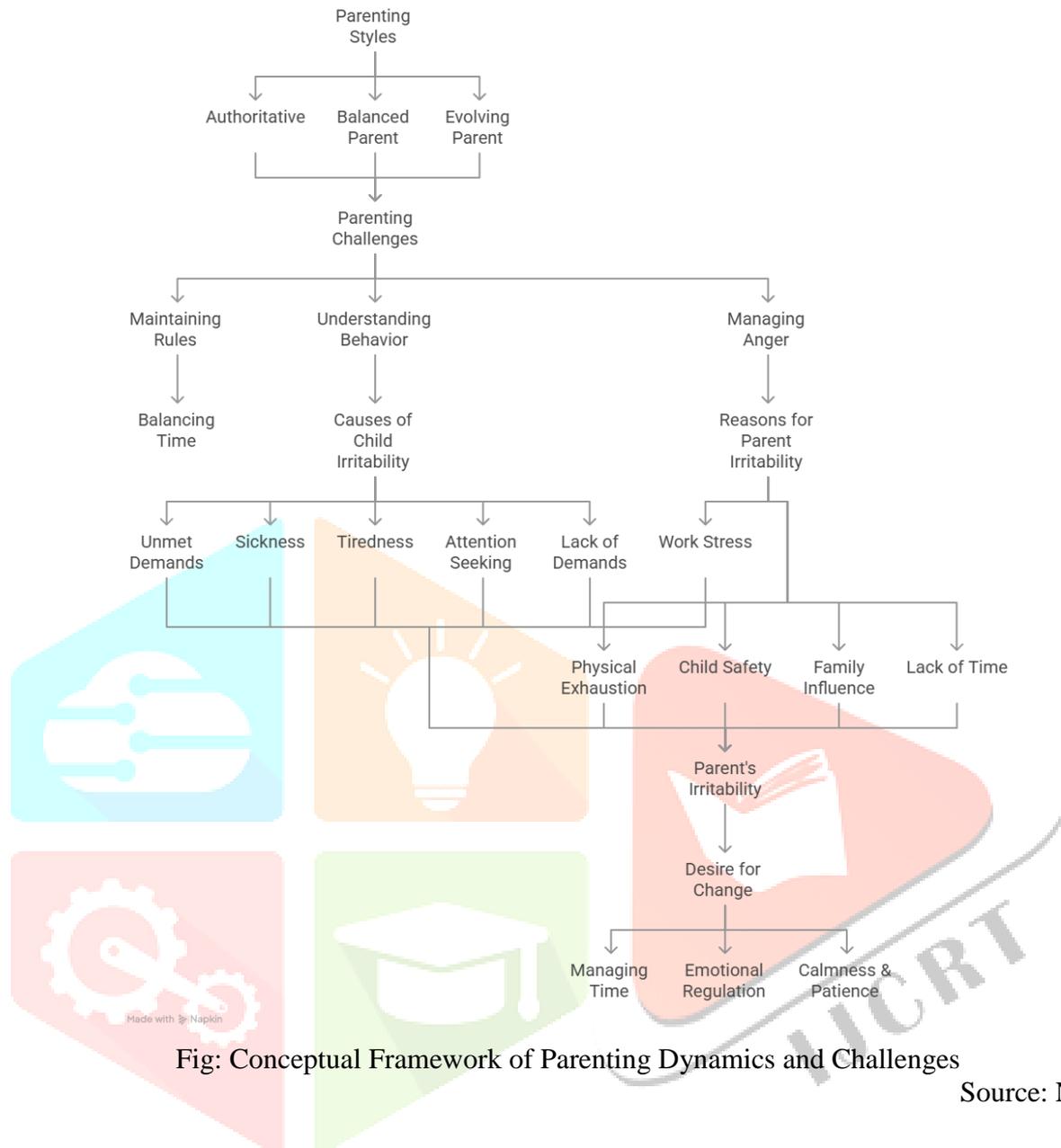


Fig: Conceptual Framework of Parenting Dynamics and Challenges

Source: Napkin Ai

## V. CONCLUSION

The aim of the study is to identify the challenges experienced by the parents while practicing authoritative parenting. Although the parents are aware of the benefits and understand the importance of practicing authoritative parenting, some external and internal stressors inhibit them from their practice of authoritative parenting. The challenges identified are difficulty in managing emotional regulations, maintaining consistency and discipline, managing time and role strain, influence of the extended family. Thus, motivating parents for parent-training programs and counselling interventions may help parents develop effective parenting strategies for maintaining a balance between parenting practice in this contemporary life. Resulting in better parent-child relationships and better psychological development of the child.

## VI. LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The findings of the study cannot be generalized as it has few limitations such as the data collected from parents having children of 5-10 age group excluding younger and adolescent kids. The data was collected from the urban population and the parent belonging to upper middle socioeconomic group, thus limiting the findings from generalizing among upper and lower socioeconomic population, also from rural and semi urban population. In this study all the parents were from Hindu religion limiting it to generalize among different cultural and religious diversity.

Despite few limitations in this study, it provides a very valuable qualitative insight into the lived experiences of the authoritative parents. And encourages need for a supportive intervention by parents focusing on time management, emotional regulation, and consistent discipline strategies. This study emphasizes one empowering parents with skills and resources to overcome the challenges faced by the parents in contemporary family life. Overall study contributes to a deeper understanding of authoritative parenting in the Current scenario and offers implication for parent education, counselling and future research with large sample size and diverse population.

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