Psychosocial Consequences of Parenting

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Abstract: *Parenting is the process of promoting and supporting the physical, emotional, social, financial and intellectual development of a child from infancy to adulthood. The quality of parenting children receive during the early years affects their cognitive potential, social skill and behavioral functioning that determine their overall success in life. The present paper focuses on four major parenting styles, namely, authoritative, authoritarian, permissive and uninvolved (laissez faire) and their impact on children's development and well-being. Research findings suggest that among all the patenting styles, authoritative parenting is the most effective one and thus, is considered to be a case of good parenting. It is associated with increased independence, self-confidence, self efficacy, competent social skills, critical thinking skills, effective emotion regulation and increased academic competence. Good or bad parenting style, thus, is determined by the psychosocial consequences it leads to. The paper also reflects on the parenting style mostly adopted in India and its impact on children. Finally, importance of an effective parenting style during the formative years of child's life have been discussed.*
Keyword: *Parenting, Parenting styles, good parenting, bad parenting, psychosocial consequences.*

I. Introduction

Parenting or child rearing is the process of promoting and supporting the physical, emotional, social, financial, and intellectual development of a child from infancy to adulthood. Parenting refers to the aspects of raising a child aside from the biological relationship. The most common caretaker in parenting is the biological parent(s) of the child in question, although others may be an older sibling, a grandparent, a legal guardian, aunt, uncle or other family member, or a family friend. Governments and society may have a role in child-rearing as well. In many cases, orphaned or abandoned children receive parental care from non-parent blood relations. Others may be adopted, raised in foster care, or placed in an orphanage. Morrison has defined parenting as "the process of developing and utilizing the knowledge and skills appropriate to planning for, creating, giving birth to, and rearing and/or providing care for offspring". This definition implies that parenting starts when there is a plan for it and it involves not just bringing up the children but also providing care for them. Parenting practices around the world share three major goals: ensuring children's health and safety, preparing children for life as productive adults and transmitting cultural values. The major factors affecting parenting are – the mature personality of the parent, the stable and intimate marital relationship of the parents, parents' motivations of having a child, a planned pregnancy, and the child's temperamental and physical attributes.

Parents respond to children's signals and control their behaviors. High quality care giving, characterized by a sensitive, cognitively stimulating and moderately controlling approach is crucial for children's development and safety. Indeed, many of the skills children acquire during the early years are fundamentally dependent on the quality of their interactions with their parents. For instance, parents play an important role in fostering children's early learning (e.g. language and problem solving abilities) and in shaping their social-emotional skills (e.g. emotion regulation, reactivity to stress and self esteem). Furthermore, parents have an influence. The quality of parenting children receive during the early years affects three key determinants of later success in school: their cognitive potential, their social skills, and their behavioral functioning.

The National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth has found that positive parenting practices act as a protective factor for children living in "at risk" environments. Effective parenting was found to moderate risk for children living in families with four or more risk factors. At the same time, research has shown that negative outcomes for children (such as challenging temperaments/behaviors) are more likely in families with poor parenting practices. Clearly, the role of parents is paramount in the development of healthy children. Parents who are able to employ positive parenting practices and create nurturing homes and harmonious family life are a precious resource. Unfortunately, parents are not always aware of the crucial role they play. The Invest in Kids Foundation conducted a National (Canadian) Survey in January, 1999 discovered that only half of the parents surveyed were confident that the stimulation and nurturing that parent provide influence how children grow and learn. Parents knew they played a key part in the emotional development of their children, but

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reported having little knowledge or confidence in how to positively influence this. The survey found that parents have poor knowledge about social and emotional development.

II. Parenting Styles

Developmental Psychologists have been interested in how parents influence the development of children's social and instrumental competence since at least the 1920s. One of the most robust approaches to this area is the study of parenting style. Thus, this paper defines parenting style, explores its four types, and discusses the consequences of the different parenting styles for children.

Parenting is a complex activity that includes many specific behaviors that work individually and together to influence the child. Although specific parenting behaviors, such as spanking or reading aloud, may influence child development, looking at any specific behavior in isolation may be misleading. Many writers have noted that specific parenting practices are less important in predicting child well-being than is the broad pattern of parenting. Most researchers who attempt to describe this broad parental milieu rely on Diana Baumrind's concept of parenting style. The construct of parenting style is used to capture normal variations in parents' attempts to control and socialize their children (Baumrind, 1991). Two points are critical in understanding this definition. First, parenting style is meant to describe normal variations in parenting. In other words, the parenting style typology Baumrind developed should not be understood to include deviant parenting, such as might be observed in abusive or neglectful homes. Second, Baumrind assumes that normal parenting revolves around issues of control. Although parents may differ in how they try to control or socialize their children and the extent to which they do so, it is assumed that the primary role of all parents is to influence, teach, and control their children.

Parenting style captures two important elements of parenting: parental responsiveness and parental demandingness (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Parental responsiveness (also referred to as parental warmth or supportiveness) refers to "the extent to which parents intentionally foster individuality, self-regulation, and self-assertion by being attuned, supportive, and acquiescent to children's special needs and demands" (Baumrind, 1991, p. 62). Parental demandingness (also referred to as behavioral control) refers to "the claims parents make on children to become integrated into the family whole, by their maturity demands, supervision, disciplinary efforts and willingness to confront the child who disobeys" (Baumrind, 1991, pp. 61-62).

II.1 Types of Parenting Styles

Categorizing parents according to whether they are high or low on parental demandingness and responsiveness creates a typology of four parenting styles: indulgent, authoritarian, authoritative, and uninvolved (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Each of these parenting styles reflects different naturally occurring patterns of parental values, practices, and behaviors (Baumrind, 1991) and a distinct balance of responsiveness and demandingness.

II.1.1 Authoritative Parenting. Described by Baumrind as the "just right" style, it combines a medium level demands on the child and a medium level responsiveness from the parents. Authoritative parents rely on positive reinforcement and infrequent use of punishment. Parents are more aware of a child's feelings and capabilities and support the development of a child's autonomy within reasonable limits. There is a give-and-take atmosphere involved in parent-child communication and both control and support are balanced. Research shows that this style is more beneficial than the too-hard authoritarian style or the too-soft permissive style. Steinberg (1990), and Steinberg et al. (1989,1991) have suggested that in adolescence, three specific components of authoritativeness contribute to health psychological development and success in school and they are – parental acceptance or warmth, behavioral supervision and strictness, and psychological autonomy and democracy. An example of authoritative parenting would be the parents talking to their child about their emotions. Steinberg et al. (1989) indicate that :

1. Authoritative parenting facilitates, rather than simply accompanies school success
2. Each component of authoritativeness studied makes an independent contribution to achievement
3. The positive impact of authoritative parenting on achievement is mediated through the development of psychosocial maturity in adolescents.

II.1.2 Authoritarian Parenting. Authoritarian parents are very rigid and strict. They place high demands on the child, but are not responsive to the child. Parents who practice authoritarian style parenting have a rigid set of rules and expectations that are strictly enforced and require rigid obedience. When the rules are not followed, punishment is most often used to promote future obedience. There is usually no explanation of punishment except that the child is in trouble for breaking a rule. "Because I said so" is a typical response to a child's question of authority. This type of authority is used more often in working-class families than the middle class. It has also been found that children raised in an authoritarian-style home are less cheerful, more moody and more vulnerable to stress. In many cases these children also demonstrate passive hostility. An example of

authoritarian parenting would be the parents harshly punishing their children and disregarding their children's feelings and emotions.

II.1.3 Permissive Parenting**.** Permissive or indulgent parenting is more popular in middle-class families than in working-class families. In these family settings, a child's freedom and autonomy are highly valued, and parents tend to rely mostly on reasoning and explanation. Parents are undemanding, so there tends to be little, if any punishment or explicit rules in this style of parenting. These parents say that their children are free from external constraints and tend to be highly responsive to whatever the child wants at the moment. Children of permissive parents are generally happy but sometimes show low levels of self-control and self-reliance because they lack structure at home. An example of permissive parenting would be the parents not disciplining their children.

II.1.4 Uninvolved or Laissez Faire Parenting**.** An uninvolved or neglectful parenting style is when parents are often emotionally absent and sometimes even physically absent. They have little or no expectation of the child and regularly have no communication. They are not responsive to a child's needs and do not demand anything of them in their behavioral expectations. If present, they may provide what the child needs for survival with little to no engagement. There is often a large gap between parents and children with this parenting style. Children with little or no communication with their own parents tended to be the victims of another child's deviant behavior and may be involved in some deviance themselves. Children of uninvolved parents suffer in social competence, academic performance, psychosocial development and problem behavior.

Because parenting style is a typology, rather than a linear combination of responsiveness and demandingness, each parenting style is more than and different from the sum of its parts (Baumrind, 1991). In addition to differing on responsiveness and demandingness, the parenting styles also differ in the extent to which they are characterized by a third dimension: psychological control. Psychological control "refers to control attempts that intrude into the psychological and emotional development of the child" (Barber, 1996, p. 3296) through use of parenting practices such as guilt induction, withdrawal of love, or shaming. One key difference between authoritarian and authoritative parenting is in the dimension of psychological control. Both authoritarian and authoritative parents place high demands on their children and expect their children to behave appropriately and obey parental rules. Authoritarian parents, however, also expect their children to accept their judgments, values, and goals without questioning. In contrast, authoritative parents are more open to give and take with their children and make greater use of explanations. Thus, although authoritative and authoritarian parents are equally high in behavioral control, authoritative parents tend to be low in psychological control, while authoritarian parents tend to be high. On the basis of this responsiveness and demandingness scale, there arises some psychological consequences characterized as good and bad parenting styles.

III. Good and Bad Parenting

Good parenting is parenting that fosters psychological adjustment . It includes elements like honesty, empathy, self-reliance, kindness, cooperation, self-control, and cheerfulness. It helps children succeed in school; it promotes the development of intellectual curiosity, motivation to learn, and desire to achieve; it deters children from antisocial behavior, delinquency, and drug and alcohol use; and it helps protect children against the development of anxiety, depression, eating disorders, and other types of psychological distress.

III.1   Characteristics of Good Parenting

III.1.1 Loving and Affectionate. A study of 2,000 parents conducted by psychology professor and researcher Robert Epstein that was published in a 2010 issue of "*Scientific American*" found that being loving and affectionate while still providing parental guidance was most important in raising happy kids. Loving parents choose to respect, encourage and nurture their children rather than judging and blaming them. They constantly affirm their love and affection, both verbally and through their behavior. By using positive reinforcement, they build self-esteem rather than tearing it down with criticism. When their child makes an achievement, they're quick to offer enthusiastic praise. A loving parent might say, "It's great that you cleaned your room without being asked" or "I'm so proud that you made it to the cricket team." This is depicted in authoritative and permissive parenting styles. Authoritative parents express warmth and affection, listen to their child's point of view, and provide opportunities for independence. Permissive parents are loving and affectionate. They tend to be very nurturing and loving and may play the role of friend rather than parent. But they don't follow a set of rules and limits to discipline the child.

III.1.2 Skillful Communicators. Parents who are skillful communicators show genuine interest in all areas of their child's life and are always available for him/her. They demonstrate respect for their child by explaining the reasons behind rules, rather than simply ordering him/her to "do as you're told". A skillful communicator encourages children to express their feelings and then listens with great understanding. Being an interested listener makes the child know that his feelings and opinions are appreciated and valued. Instead of belittling a child's feelings by telling him he's "wrong" to feel a certain way, the parent shows empathy to the child.

III.1.3. Ability to Manage Stress. According to Epstein, the ability of parents to manage stress and temper leads to well-adjusted children. Children often handle stress by mirroring how their parents manage emotions during stressful situations. Parents who come home and complain about their job, boss, use foul language, argue or take out their frustration on their kids, set a poor example for healthy stress management. If parents are unable to cope with stress, it also causes their kids to feel anxious and less secure. Children in such cases are most likely to imitate their parents' behavior while handling any stressful condition.

III.1.4 Respectful of Autonomy. Rebellion on occasion is a healthy part of the child's attempt to develop his autonomy. Parents, who value their child's emerging independence, choose to nurture it rather than attempting to tamp it down. Instead of dictating rules, they ask for their child's input and make setting rules a joint project. So children who are allowed to participate in making decisions become more motivated to carry them out. For instance, if a child refuses to stop playing a video game and go to bed, parents might agree to a compromise by saying, "You can play for an extra 15 minutes, but then it's bedtime." Remaining flexible shows parents are honoring the child's needs, but still setting limits. This characteristic is a part of authoritative parenting style. Authoritative parents set rules and explain the reasons behind them, and they are also flexible and willing to make exceptions to the rules in certain cases.

III.1.5 Positive Role Models. Children learn through observation and often mimic the behavior of their parents. When they watch their parents arguing and losing control, they feel less safe. They might try to resolve conflicts by fighting and arguing, just like their parents do. But parents who are able to work out their conflicts and disagreements through calm discussions rather than heated arguments become healthy role models. Parents portray those traits that they hope to develop in their child, such as kindness, compassion, honesty, respectfulness, tolerance, patience, honesty and unconditional love.

Thus, it is deduced that authoritative parenting style is highly related to the characteristics of good parenting, while permissive parenting only focuses on some positive aspects of it like showing love, concern, affection, and warmth; overlooking the discipline and autonomy aspect of parenting children.

III.2 Psychosocial Consequences of Good Parenting

The authoritative parenting style is the most optimal style because here, the parents' control over the child is not absolute, instead it is reasonable, and allows for discussion of rules and consequences. In addition, parents promote a sense of independence and responsibility, reinforcing the child's belief that they can eventually take care of themselves successfully. This leads to positive outcomes for the child such as increased self-confidence, self-efficacy, competent social skills, effective emotion regulation, and increased academic competence (Baumrind, 1966, 1971; Lamborn, Mounts, Steinberg, & Dornbusch, 1991).

Parenting practices in an authoritative household center around positive development in every aspect of one's life. Positive support and high expectations, along with providing children a lot of opportunities, helps predict independence, self-confidence, motivation, critical thinking skills and self-regulation (Hess & McDevitt, 1984; Ginsburg & Bronstien, 1993). An example of a positively involved parent would be a parent cycling with their child to promote physical health or reading to their child to promote academic success. Additionally, according to Baumrind (1996), authoritative discipline strategies (e.g. setting firm, consistent limits and providing the child a reason for the rules) promotes social responsibility, self-regulation, appropriate assertiveness, and individuality and independence. The authoritative parenting style has also been related to high levels of family interaction and family cohesiveness (Garg, et al., 2005).

Dornbusch et al.(1987) examined the relation between parenting style and adolescent school performance using nearly 8,000 adolescents (aged 14-18 years) from a variety of backgrounds and indicated that in virtually each ethnic (including Asian), socio-economic and family structure group, adolescents whose parents were less permissive, less authoritarian, and more authoritative performed better in school than their peers.

Research on school outcomes shows that authoritative parenting is associated with increase in a number of attitudinal and behavioral indicators of academic orientation during adolescence, including a stronger work orientation, greater engagement in classroom activities, higher educational aspirations, more positive feelings about school, greater time spent on homework and more positive academic self-conception (Steinberg, Elmen, and Mounts1989; Lamborn et al., 1991).

The permissive parenting style, like the authoritative style, is more child-centered than other styles which accounts for strong parent/child bonds. Where this style differs from authoritative is with regard to expectations. The permissive parent places little to no expectation on their child concerning achievement and behavior. Children of permissive parents engage in more selfishly motivated activities than do children of differing parenting styles. However, because these children have high parental engagement they tend to be creative, self-confident and playful.

One great example of good parenting is the father in *To Kill a Mockingbird,* the classic novel written in 1960 by Harper Lee. The positive parenting techniques adopted in it are discussed below .

Atticus Finch is a single parent. He admits to his sister who thinks he should control his children better that he only has so much time to give. With that time, he chooses to focus on what's really important—for example, teaching his daughter to control her temper, instead of getting sidetracked by the pressure to get her to wear dresses instead of overalls. He understands that reaching the hearts of his children is the big stuff and that's where he directs his parenting efforts.

Atticus also understands that having empathy for others helps children become kind and compassionate. So when his daughter Scout complains about how her school teacher acted that day, Atticus tells her, "You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view . . . until you climb into his skin and walk around in it." Scout remembers Atticus's words and develops the ability to empathize with others regardless of race, economic standing, or even unusual behavior.

When Atticus's son, Jem, decided to stay all day and into the night in his tree house, Atticus didn't scream and holler for him to come down. He didn't interfere, knowing Jem's discomfort would eventually work as reality discipline. As Scout says of Jem, "…he would've remained overnight had not Atticus severed his supply lines… I was carrying him blankets for the night when Atticus said if I paid no attention to him, Jem would come down. Atticus was right."

Atticus always listened to both sides of the story before making a decision to punish his children.

Atticus is realistic enough to see the weaknesses in his children, but he doesn't make them feel badly about their struggles. Atticus's children knew he believed in them, and that made them want to please him.

Atticus, being a single parent has displayed honest, sincere approach to rearing his children has made him one of the most admired fathers in American Literature. Without a female influence in the family, he is sensible enough to employ Calpurnia, a member of Black community, and disregard his sister's advice to fire her. Calpurnia offers the children a firm feminine side, and they gain respect for the African-American community of Maycomb in the process. Atticus teaches his children the importance of education even though he did not go to school. He teaches the need for tolerance when dealing with other people and that a humble and peaceful nature is preferable to physical violence.

III.3   Characteristics of Bad Parenting

Bad parenting is mostly a case belonging to anyone of the three parenting styles, i.e., authoritarian, permissive, uninvolved, parenting styles which are high in demandingness and/or high in responsiveness. These styles lack a balance and thus give rise to some forms of bad parenting styles.

III.3.1   Being Arrogant to Kids. Arrogance is the worst communication mode, especially with kids. Shouting and yelling at kids is very destructive. Children are very sensitive and they react to the unwanted situations in the worst way by developing strange defense mechanisms and negatively responding to parents.

III.3.2   Breaking Promises**.** Breaking a promise communicate the untrustworthiness of the parents.

III.3.3   Satisfying All Their Demands**.** Parents, who believe in buying kids all they ask for, spoil the life of children. Kids are immature to decide what they need and what not. They get attracted to the things used by other children and may demand for the same. Satisfying every demand of children will lead to a hike in demands in future.

III.3.4   Never Letting Kids Know Hardship**.** Life is a mixture of pleasure and hardship. Most of the parents do not wish their kids know hardships. Struggles of life is the essence of life and only by facing struggles and hardships, a child may grow strong enough to face the hard realities of life. Parents who spoon-feed their child often have children facing lot of difficulties when they start their own life.

III.3.5   Pushing Kids Too Hard**.** Parents push kids in the mad race of the world and force them to excel in all fields of life, pushing aside all the competitors. In schools, at home, and everywhere children find their life a competition.

III.4   Psychosocial Consequences of Bad Parenting

The consequences of bad parenting are visible in the authoritarian, permissive, and laissez faire parenting styles.

III.4.1   Authoritarian Parenting Style**.** Children raised in authoritarian environments have low degree of self-reliance and social competence as compared to children raised in authoritative environments (Lamborn, Mounts, Steinberg, & Dornbush 1991). The failure of parents to form a warm, supportive relationship with their child impedes the development of emotional understanding and empathy (Hoffman, 1994). Shumow, Vandell, and Posner (1998) noted in their research report that controlling the family income, race, family structure, parental education, and maternal unemployment, authoritarian parenting style results in poorer academic developmental outcomes in both third and fifth grade. Third grade children with authoritarian parents demonstrated poorer behavioral adjustment. The fifth grade children predicted poorer achievement test scores, lower ratings from teachers of their behavioral adjustment, and more behavior problems. Two of the most finest examples of this parenting style is portrayed in following movies - 3 Idiots: The movie highlights the problems of highly demanding parents pushing their kids too hard in a mad and mindless race to achieve success and excel without

paying any heed to their children's interests and passion in life. The Professor's son committed suicide as a result of continuous failures in his engineering entrance exams. This is a fine example of authoritarian parenting style.

Tamasha: This is a case of authoritarian parenting style. A child who loves hearing stories and dwells in the spirit of all stories eventually gets trapped and chained in his father's consistent demands of pursuing a technical career. As he gives in for this career, he goes on to do everything in life that he dislikes doing. And in the long run, becomes a robot by trying to behave according to the socially acceptable conventions of the society.

III.4.2 Laissez Faire or Uninvolved Parenting Style. Baumrind (1991) found that children whose parents have an uninvolved parenting style have the worst outcomes on a number of behavioral and psychological measures. These children demonstrate high rates of problem behaviors and drug use (Baumrind, 1991; Lamborn et al., 1991; Slicker, 1998). The lack of parental presence in the uninvolved parenting environment and its adverse effects on children's development was consistent with other findings (Mamari, Blum, & Tuefel-Shone, 2010). The majority of the participants in that study felt that the lack of parental presence was the major reason why American India youth or juveniles get involved in drugs and violence. Furthermore, because the discipline of the authoritarian parenting style is imposed on children, these children rely on external controls rather than self-regulation (Hoffman, 1994). This external imposition of authority can increase the likelihood that adolescent or juveniles will rebel (Baumrind, 1978) and may become delinquent. Moreover children of neglectful parents tend to rank low in terms of cognitive and emotional empathy development which is considered to be of significant importance with regard to positive social development (Schaffer, Clark, & Jeglic, 2009). An example of this type parenting is seen in the movie Udaan. This movie portrays the uninvolved parenting style along with a high degree of autocratic parenting style. The father is an autocratic leader of the family. His responsibility rests in providing the school fees of his children. He keeps the decision completely to himself, leaving no scope for a dialogue or even an argument for that matter with his children. He has a set of rules for appropriate behavior and often gives coercive and corporal punishments to children when they defy these rules.

III.4.3 Permissive Parenting Style. The children who have permissive parents have a propensity to engage in deviant social behaviors more frequently which includes drug use and early sexual contact (Pellerin, 2005; Shumow et. al., 1998). Without fear of repercussion, these children are free to experiment with both positive and negative behavior. Children of permissive parents tend to have high social confidence and self-esteem but lower academic achievement and school involvement. They also tend to be less responsible and more easily drawn into negative social behavior. Children in this category of parenting also exhibit higher rates of hyperactivity and aggression than other styles (Meteyer & Jenkins, 2009).The Permissive style of parenting directly contributes to low cognitive and emotional empathy development (Aunola et. al., 2000). Because this parenting style is completely child focused, concern for others feelings and experiences are not of high importance to children of permissive parenting. Empathy development is believed to be an essential character trait in positive adult outcomes. In turn, the relationship between low empathy development, permissive parenting and antisocial behavior is believed to have effects that establish in childhood and continue into adulthood (Schaffer, Clark, & Jeglic 2009). An example of this parenting style is seen in the movie Drishyam. The movie highlights the permissive parenting style. Tabu, an Inspector General of Police, married to a wealthy business tycoon spoils his only son by giving him complete freedom over people and assets. The boy's behavior is not monitored or even disciplined by his parents. The boy ends up in sexual indulgent acts at an early age.

IV. Parenting In India

India is a land of diverse traditions, all rooted in the same value system. With the trend of joint families still prevalent in India, a child is brought up in an environment where she learns to value people and relations. More than taking care of the physical growth of the child during her younger years, a grandmother in the house plays a vital role in instilling the moral values in the child. She learns to respect her elders from what she sees around in the house. This is an important factor in determining how the child deals with the people outside her family. The Indian parenting style builds the respect for other people, their values and customs. Indian parents believe strongly that their child is part of a family and a community and that it is of prime importance that the child realizes that every decision she makes and every action she takes has consequences for the entire family and community. This makes her responsible towards the family and most importantly, the community. Comparing this with the West, parents believe strongly in the idea that their child is an individual whose individual rights should be respected. In conforming to this ideal, they fear criticizing or punishing their child. Thus, the child grows up to value personal interests more than those of the community. On the other hand, the Indian principle of giving more value to others, builds up a sense of belonging and harmony with the community and thus the environment, which needs our attention now, more than ever.

On the academic front, Indian parents assign a lot of importance to scores and their child's performance in school. They keep themselves updated about the child's academic as well as their social life. The Indian

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formula is very simple — '*help the children achieve their utmost, which is often more than what they think'*. Watching TV or hanging out with friends might make the child happier, but in the long run, if she keeps up her academics, she would be able to earn well and succeed in life. Thus, while extra-curricular activities are appreciated, the focus is mainly on academics. On the other hand, while the Western parents do keep track of their child's school work, they emphasize more on happiness than a good academic record and so they let their child pursue her passion. But, the Indian parent has an argument here; '*if you let a ten-year-old child pursue her passion, she might end up sitting on Facebook for five hours in a day'*. This kind of freedom is detrimental to her growth. The Indian parents' emphasis on academics leads to the sense of competitiveness in the child and thus, she has an edge over her Western counterpart when they are brought on the same stage. So, not only does Indian parenting promote respect for others and their values, it also brings up a more successful child. Thus, the '*building of the child's life'* grows up higher and higher since the foundation is strong enough to hold it.

While there are variations in the rural- urban (Indian) upbringing, the basic elements of parenting remain the same. For example, an urban child might hang out with friends more as compared to the rural child, but the importance of family is well understood by both of them. With the advent of modernisation, the Indian parent is opening up to the wishes of the child but they are able to balance the welfare of the child with her wishes. Thus, Indian parenting is evolving and marching into the realm of most of the favourable form of parenting.

V.Conclusion

Families, especially parents, are a child's backbone. But care must be taken that the child develops his own backbone and does not stay dependent on his parents for almost a quarter of his life, as happens in many cases in India. Consequently, a child often stops pursuing his dreams and follows his parents' dreams and in early years of his life, his creativity is restricted.

All parents certainly want to protect their children, but being overprotective, they spoil their lives. In today's globalised and highly competitive world, an individual must be determined enough to take quick decisions and this can come only if his parents inculcate this habit right from his/her childhood years. In fact, things learnt during the formative years of one's life help, shape his/her mind and character.

Undoubtedly then, parenting is a practice which demands a lot of dedication, involvement and sacrifice. Being good parents is not providing kids with what all that makes them happy, but deciding what they need to grow up maturely and responsibly.

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