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The Impact of Parenting Practices on Child Development: A Critical Assessment of Current Studies

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ABSTRACT

Parenting styles strongly affect many aspects of child development, including emotional, cognitive, and social outcomes. This review examines current studies to investigate the relationship between parenting variables and their impact on children's development. It explains key data on the effects of authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and negligent parenting on children's self-esteem, academic performance, and emotional regulation. The review uses neurodevelopmental and longitudinal methods. This work highlights the importance of culture, social status, and gender in shaping these effects. Still, there are gaps in understanding the long-term results of different parenting, especially across cultures and in marginalized groups. Future research should use big data, longitudinal designs, and technology to close these gaps. This study gives practical insights for parents, educators, and policymakers. It stresses the need for policies that support child development in a changing socioeconomic environment.

Keywords: Authoritative Parenting, Emotional Regulation, Cross-Cultural Parenting, Socioeconomic Status, Neurodevelopmental Approaches

Introduction

Background

Parenting greatly affects a child's emotional, cognitive, social, and behavioral growth. Research highlights the importance of parental views on child development, focusing on parenting typologies (Candelanza et al. 2021, Booth et al. 2021). Diana Baumrind's theory introduces three parenting styles: authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive. Later, Maccoby and Martin introduced negligent parenting as a fourth category (Zhussipbek & Nagayeva, 2022; Kausar & Afaq, 2024).

Importance of Parenting in Child Development

Effective parenting helps children flourish and equips them to solve problems and seize opportunities (Kathuria and Salunkhe, 2021). Adaptable family practices can support positive development and help prevent negative outcomes (Candelanza et al. 2021).

Research Problem and Rationale

In modern culture, parenting has become more complex due to technology, dual-income homes, and changing standards. So, it is essential for parents and educators to understand current parenting types to support a child's development (Kausar & Afaq, 2024). Examining these types provides insights to help improve children's welfare, academic success, and self-actualization during their early years (Zhussipbek & Nagayeva, 2022).



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Research Objectives

This review aims to address the following objectives:

To define and categorize parenting styles, emphasizing their theoretical underpinnings.

To analyze the impact of parenting styles on various developmental domains (emotional, cognitive, social, behavioral).

To evaluate the influence of cultural and socio-economic factors on parenting approaches and outcomes.

To examine the interplay of parenting styles with external factors such as genetics, peer influence, parenting, Emotional and educational environments.

Research Scope

This report rigorously examines current material to provide a thorough knowledge of parenting styles and their effects on child development. The text examines the ideas associated with various parenting styles, highlighting their distinctions and variations, beginning with Baumrind's initial categorization and progressing to later expansions by additional scholars (Zhussipbek & Nagayeva, 2022; Kausar & Afaq, 2024). This study examines the impact of parenting practices as predictors of many aspects of children's development, identifying both beneficial and detrimental impacts associated with certain forms of parenting (Candelanza et al. 2021, Booth et al. 2021).

Parenting Styles:

Definitions and Frameworks Theoretical Foundations:

Diana Baumrind's Framework of Parenting Styles

Diana Baumrind's paradigm for parenting styles remains a seminal model in psychological and educational research. The paradigm, established in the 1960s, categorizes parenting into four principal styles: authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful, characterized by responsiveness and demandingness (Figure 1) (Yaffe, 2023). Authoritative parenting, characterized by elevated positive parental regard, high responsiveness, and significant structuring or demandingness, is an exceptionally effective parenting style that positively influences child development, including academic success, emotional growth, and social skills (Kannan & Chandrahasan, 2024). Authoritarian parenting is defined by high expectations coupled with low warmth and/or negative esteem, manifesting as subjection, rigid demands, and directives, characterized by autocratic control and little warmth and encouragement. The lenient parenting style exhibits considerable sensitivity while maintaining minimal expectations for the kid. Consequently, the majority of youngsters lack discipline. These fundamental styles have provided a conceptual foundation for fifty years of empirical research on the effects of parenting on children (Kannan & Chandrahasan, 2024; Sorkhabi & Larzelere, 2019). Following Baumrind's initial formulations, further expansions and modifications to her framework included the constraints and additional classes. In the 1980s, psychologists Maccoby and Martin introduced a fourth kind of parenting known as neglectful. This style is characterized by little responsiveness and high demandingness, often resulting in adverse developmental outcomes.



Fig 1 | Diana Baumrind's Parenting Framework by Palvidis, 2020



Fig 2 | Social-emotional development factors by AAP (2025) Simplified version

Consequences for children include insufficient emotional stability, subpar performance, and disruptive behaviors (Sorkhabi & Larzelere, 2019; Rouzi et al., 2020). This particular category included the effects of inadequate or unsatisfactory parenting, so augmenting Baumrind’s model and integrates diverse parental approaches. These parenting styles are defined by distinct characteristics that influence child outcomes. Affectionate acceptance of the kid defines authoritative parents and their authoritative parenting techniques. They establish elevated expectations for their children while simultaneously addressing their needs. This correlates with improved estimations, enhanced academic achievement, and the welfare of children (Candelanza et al., 2021). Authoritative parents use punitive measures and require compliance from their children, resulting in diminished self-esteem and elevated stress levels in these children relative to their peers, even though these children may exhibit good behavior and achieve superior academic performance in some contexts (Yaffe, 2023). Authoritative parents exhibit affection but lack sufficient control, resulting in a child's failure to develop responsibility and self-discipline, ultimately fostering immature habits and inadequate social skills (Yaffe, 2023). The only inadequate child-rearing style associated with the most detrimental effects, including behavioral problems and difficulties with emotional regulation, is characterized by cold, uninvolved, and harsh parenting (Rouzi et al., 2020). Nonetheless, the methodologies used in contemporary research to evaluate parenting styles have become increasingly sophisticated. PSDQ and PAQ are mostly used as instruments to assess parenting styles. These instruments use self-reported and observational data to assess responsiveness, demandingness, and other critical aspects of parenting (Sangawi et al., 2020). Progress in research methodology, including longitudinal studies and neurodevelopmental approaches, has yielded enhanced understanding of the intricate relationship between parenting styles and child development (Kannan & Chandrahasan, 2024).

The Impact of Parenting Styles on Child Development Emotional Development

Parenting techniques influence a child's foundational attachment theory and emotional regulation skills. Authoritative responsiveness fosters safe attachment and enhances emotional regulation, since parental warmth and conduct provide boundaries that instruct children correctly managing their emotions. Conversely, authoritarian parenting characterized by stringent discipline adversely affects the child's emotional well-being



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and hinders the development of their emotional coping mechanisms (Kalil & Ryan, 2020). In the permissive approach to parenting, children are often pampered, and their emotions are generally not cultivated to be disciplined as they mature. Consequently, they exhibit disruptive behavior when confronted with intricate activities (Poon, 2020). Medical research examining parenting quality characterized by emotional detachment or absence indicates attachment issues and emotional dysregulation, leading to lifetime psychiatric disorders (Figure 2) (Currie & Goodman, 2020).

Cognitive Development

The influence of parenting styles on academic performance and problem-solving abilities is well-documented in cognitive development research. Parents who consistently exert high demands while providing support foster the child's curiosity, tenacity, and academic self-concept, hence enhancing academic success (Straatmann et al., 2020). Furthermore, authoritarian parenting fosters compliance and academic achievement, but at the expense of creativity and self-regulation (Kalil & Ryan, 2020). Parenting characterized by minimal expectations and the absence of established disciplinary guidelines will result in subpar academic achievement, since the kid lacks enough guidance and correction (Poon, 2020). A deficiency in parental supervision correlates positively with diminished academic performance and inadequate impulse control, since children in such environments lack effective cognitive stimulation (Figure 3).

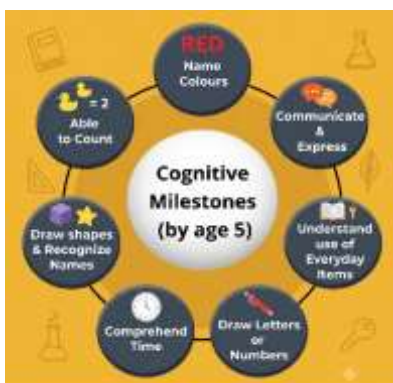


Fig 3 | Cognitive development in children by CLL (2025)



Fig 4 | Benefits of social-emotional development by PAC (2023)

Social Development

Parenting approaches influence social development, including peer connections, empathy, and communication skills. Authoritative parenting cultivates compliance, respect, and acceptable language usage, enhancing social competence and promoting a responsible and positive attitude towards peers (Spittler, 2019). Authoritative parenting that emphasizes punishment impedes a child's social competency by diminishing direct communication and, therefore, social engagement (Sorkhabi & Larzelere, 2019). The socialization fostered by permissive parenting results in children acquiring inadequate conflict-resolution skills due to the absence of appropriate boundaries. The most detrimental parenting style among the four is neglectful, resulting in dads who neglect to engage with their children, leading to offspring who possess limited social connections, struggle to understand others' emotions, and fail to interact effectively (Figure 4) (Currie & Goodman, 2020).



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Behavioral Development

Parenting styles significantly affect discipline, self-regulation, and propensity for risk-taking behaviors. Authoritative parenting embodies self-discipline and prudent risk-taking, providing the kid with the self-assurance and structure essential for making sound decisions (Currie & Goodman, 2020). Conversely, authoritarian parenting, characterized by imposed obedience-oriented regulations, impedes self-regulation. In circumstances necessitating personal choice, people may exhibit excessive compliance or defiance (Spittler, 2019). This is accurate, particularly when permissive parents fail to enforce regulations. Consequently, the youngsters fail to develop sufficient self-regulation over their behaviors (Poon, 2020). A deficiency in attention is a primary element contributing to a kid's delinquency, since such environments compel the youngster to seek validation and guidance outside (Currie & Goodman, 2020).

Cultural and Socioeconomic Contexts

Cultural differences significantly impact parenting approaches, especially when contrasting collectivist and individualist nations. Subculture origins may be seen in collectivist civilizations prevalent in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, characterized by fundamental values such as interdependence, familial obligations, and communal harmony. An authoritarian parenting style is often seen in such a system, since it aligns with the cultural values of obedience and respect for authority. Although these practices may seem severe from a conventional child developmental viewpoint in Western countries, they have a positive correlation with favorable developmental psychology, which includes responsibilities toward family members and societal order in collectivist cultures (Calders et al., 2020). Authoritative parenting is more prevalent in these contexts since it integrates autonomy with guidelines and instructions, promoting both academic and social achievement (Salavera et al., 2022). The impact of socioeconomic status (SES) on parenting methodologies is substantial, determining both the resources accessible to parents and their capacity to execute certain methods efficiently. Numerous high socioeconomic status parents use authoritative parenting due to their greater access to resources, including literature, physical activities, and professional consultations. These tools enable the creation of a supportive atmosphere for care and discipline, promoting cognitive and emotional development (Batool, 2020).

Examining the potential impacts of socioeconomic status (SES), it is evident that it has a significant influence on a kid, as it dictates the child's access to opportunities and elements that constitute the social environment in which development transpires. Children from high socioeconomic status homes are likely to encounter more advantageous inputs that enhance their human capital, namely, superior education, great healthcare, and other enhancements that will contribute to their development as individuals in the future. Although low socioeconomic status (SES) is associated with increased stress, instability in housing, and insufficient childhood education, high SES does not provide resources to mitigate these adverse consequences. Consequently, learners exhibit inadequate emotional self-regulation, resulting in subpar academic performance and compromised health, ultimately leading to lifetime disadvantages (Pozzi et al., 2020).

Interaction of Parenting Styles with Additional Influences

Parenting methods influence genetic predispositions, underscoring the intricate relationship between nature and nurture in determining child outcomes. Temperament is influenced by genetics, cognitive ability, and emotional intelligence, whereas the



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expression of these traits is contingent upon parenting style. Children with a genetic predisposition to anxiety will exhibit fewer symptoms in authoritative households due to the presence of structured support. Conversely, authoritarian or neglectful parenting is likely to exacerbate this condition, since parenting significantly influences a child's emotional and psychological well-being (Pallotta-Chiarolli et al., 2020). Research indicates a reciprocal relationship between parenting and genetics, wherein individual genes may influence outcomes that elicit certain parenting approaches, but overarching developmental patterns are also impacted (Lévesque et al., 2020). The influence of peer groups, media, and educational contexts also alters the effects of parenting methods on children. Playgroups become more significant as children mature, facilitating the acquisition of behavioral skills and contributing to personality development. Authoritative parenting has been associated with healthy peer relationships in children, since this method fosters empathy, communication, and problem-solving skills. The ultimate impact is media exposure, which may either endorse or contradict parental guidance. Children raised in permissive households may lack sufficient guidance in interpreting messages presented via media. Conversely, those raised in authoritative households are more inclined to engage with media information constructively (Berger & Carlson, 2020). Coparenting and mixed family relationships provide other complexities. In shared parenting arrangements, a more pronounced alignment of the family parenting style impedes the child's development. Authoritative parenting and authoritarian or permissive and indulgent styles are two contrasting approaches that confuse children and hinder developmental outcomes. Conversely, cooperative parenting amplifies the effectiveness of a chosen approach, particularly when both caregivers adopt an authoritative technique. Blended families may indeed provide challenges, since a kid may encounter conflicting parenting styles between a biological parent and a step-parent. These dynamics often need an unobstructed exchange of communication among caregivers to assist the kid, especially when mutual regard has been cultivated; this fosters predictability in the child's life (Berger & Carlson, 2020). Researchers acknowledge their significance in mitigating the effects of parental practices. For instance, a child's predisposition to emotional dysregulation may be mitigated by constructive peer influence and appropriate parental guidance (Jeong et al., 2021).

Modern Challenges in Parenting

Technology and Digital Media

The extensive use of technology and digital media has profoundly transformed parent-child relationships and oversight. Technology in education may enhance content and diversity in learning; nevertheless, excessive usage and internet access negatively impact a child's cognitive capacity, emotional health, and social interactions (Morawska, 2020). Guardians are sometimes compelled to establish stringent regulations for a child's viewing permissions, and often, in the contemporary fast-paced environment, both parents are employed and thus unable to dedicate substantial time to supervision. A pertinent example from the study domain is the reduction in face-to-face contact within families and the diminished emotional connection attributed to heightened dependence on technology (Frosch et al., 2021).

Dual-Working Parents and Time Constraints

The rising occurrence of dual-income households presents issues concerning time limitations and work-life equilibrium. Couples engaged in dual employment have difficulties in allocating enough parenting time, perhaps resulting in insufficient



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caregiving and supervision. The absence of time is the last underlying factor that might provoke uneven parenting practices, resulting in children necessitating external assistance or technology. Both findings highlight that despite the challenges parents encounter, effective time management and collaborative caregiving may mitigate the adverse effects resulting from less parental availability (Cano, 2022).

Mental Health Challenges for Parents and Children

Mental health issues are a significant problem in modern parenting. Families experiencing stress, anxiety, or depression may struggle to interact positively with their children, perhaps jeopardizing the emotional stability of the latter (Morawska, 2020). The reciprocal relationship between parental and child mental health, whereby challenges faced by either party affect the other, is a well-established phenomenon. The transition to motherhood and reintegration into this role is linked to heightened stress levels and relationship conflict, which subsequently undermines relational satisfaction and effective parenting abilities. Efficient management of such problems via support systems, counseling, and therapeutic treatments establishes a foundation for improving the caregiver-child connection (Cano, 2022).

Critical Review of Methodologies

This study used a systematic methodology to identify and assess papers pertinent to parenting styles and their impact on child development. The inclusion and exclusion criteria were established to provide a targeted and thorough examination of current research (Palvidis, 2020). The procedure for selecting studies is outlined below.

Process of Selection

Database Search: PubMed, PsycInfo, and Scopus were used in the literature review. The following keywords were used: “parenting styles,” “child development,” “authoritative parenting,” “cross-cultural parenting,” and “socioeconomic.”

Initial Screening: Titles and abstracts were then truncated to eliminate non-relevant articles and studies and eventual duplicate records.

Full-Text Screening: The researches were filtered by primary and secondary parameters to check its relevance to the topic.

Quality Assessment: Effectiveness was evaluated based on methodological characteristics of the reviewed studies, such as the sample size, analysis type, and the reporting degree.

Final Selection: To carry out the present review, all research that met the inclusion criteria was only considered for further analysis.

Table 1 | Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Publication date	Studies published between 2019 and 2026	Studies published before 2019
Language	Studies available in English	Studies in languages other than English
Type of study	Empirical studies, systematic reviews, meta-analyses, and longitudinal research	Opinion pieces, editorials, or case reports not backed by empirical data
Population	Studies involving children aged 0 – 18 years and their parents	Studies focusing exclusively on adult populations or unrelated age groups



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Focus on parenting styles	Research explicitly analyzing parenting styles (authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, neglectful)	Studies that do not categorize parenting approaches or focus on unrelated family dynamics
Cultural Context	Studies discussing cultural, socioeconomic, or cross-cultural aspects of parenting styles	Studies lacking contextual analysis of culture or socioeconomic variables
Outcomes measured	Emotional, cognitive, social, and behavioral outcomes in children	Studies that do not measure or report child developmental outcomes
Accessibility	Full-text studies available through open access or institutional subscriptions	Abstract-only studies or those behind paywalls without institutional access

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria (Refer to Table 1)

Research Designs Commonly Used in Studies on Parenting and Child Development

Research on parenting and child development combines observational studies, cross-sectional surveys, and longitudinal research to investigate the relationship between parenting practices and developmental outcomes. Subcategories of randomized controlled trials (RCTs), which are experimental methodologies, are often used to evaluate parenting programs and their efficacy on early childhood development. One research study selected only randomized controlled trials (RCTs) to examine the beneficial effects of enhanced cognitive and socio-emotional development in children up to three years of age (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2025). These studies emphasize the need for a systematic approach to assessing parental provisions across various situations.

Limitations in Existing Research

Notwithstanding progress in approaches, considerable limits endure. This is particularly applicable to the sample, most of which remains primarily sourced from Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, and Democratic (WEIRD) nations. This bias limits the conclusions that may be drawn on the use of the scale in different cultural and economic contexts (INC., 2023). Moreover, supplementary information, crucial for evaluating change rates in participants, is rather limited due to the high expenses and organizational demands associated with such investigations (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2025). It is important to emphasize that values and cultural biases are also ingrained in parenting research, where several theoretical models often promote Western norms for the appropriate method of child-rearing. Furthermore, parental gendered behaviors and their developmental implications are inadequately researched in non-Western nations, hence diminishing the capacity to elucidate cultural variations within the parenting framework (INC., 2023).

Progress in Research Methodologies

Recent advancements in research methodology have started to mitigate these constraints (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2025). Neurodevelopmental techniques, including neuroimaging and psychophysiological assessments, provide insights into the impact of parenting approaches on a child's brain and self-regulation. The authors investigated the relational health approach, using neurodevelopmental results to assess the reciprocal impacts of parent-child relationships on health outcomes (Capric's Learning Lab, 2023).



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Gaps in Research and Future Directions

Notwithstanding considerable advancements in comprehending the correlation between parenting and kid development, substantial deficiencies persist. Many studies have identified certain traditional parenting styles, although there is a scarcity of research on novel parenting approaches influenced by innovations and family organizational structures. The notion of digital parenting concerning cognitive, emotional, and social development has not been well investigated (Morawska, 2020). They emphasize that gendered parenting methods have been seldom examined across many cultural settings, resulting in a limited comprehension of their influence on child outcome alleles (INC., 2023).

Novel Contributions

Innovative frameworks like collaborative parenting networks and adaptable work policies are crucial for tackling modern parenting issues. Collaborative networks and shared decision-making (SDM) may provide resources and services that enable parents to distribute responsibilities (Arif et al., 2025). Telecommuting and flexible scheduling are essential for handling the work and family obligations of parents. Thus, including mental health promotion in parenting programs may assist parents in supporting both themselves and their children (FDNA, 2024). They may promote a constructive parenting paradigm that augments support and responsiveness to contemporary family dynamics (Figure 5).

Modern Relevance

Digital parenting, dual-income homes, and mental wellness are essential components of modern parenting. Digital parenting is assisting children in managing the information they encounter via technology when using the internet and the types of material they seek (Caprics Learning Lab, 2023). In dual-income homes, discernible tactics may be used by two working people.

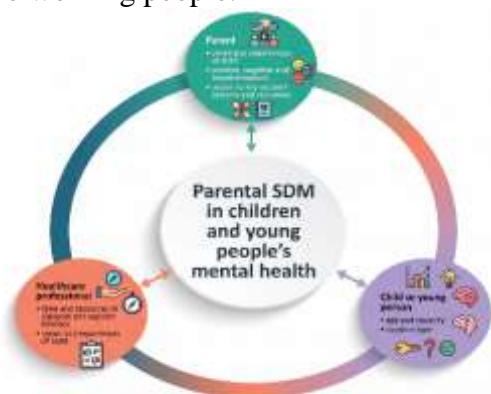


Fig 5 | Parental SDM in children and young people's mental health

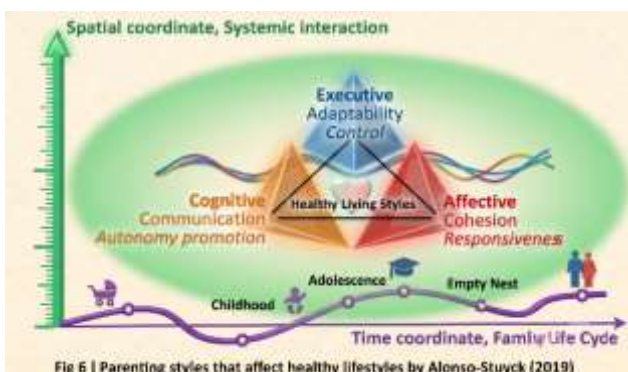


Fig 6 | Parenting styles that affect healthy lifestyles by Alonso-Stuyck (2019)

to balance professional commitments and familial obligations. Parental mental health is



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becoming a significant issue to improve stress management and assist the emotional well-being of both parents and children. It is vital to address these areas to enable many families to cultivate good connections and empower parents to confront various life challenges (Figure 6).

Practical Applications

Considering the prevailing parenting issues, educators, leaders, and parents might integrate the following insights. Educators may integrate digital literacy and mental health courses into the training provided to students and their parents (Kaniušonytė & Laursen, 2020). Employer champions may collaborate with lawmakers to promote pro-family policies, such as paid parental leave and flexible work arrangements, to better support dual-breadwinner families. They may assist their children in formulating timetables and schedules, communicate effectively, and engage other organizations (Capric's Learning Lab, 2023). By executing the aforementioned tactics, stakeholders create a conducive environment for familial well-being and the development of both parents and children.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the examination of parenting styles and their impact on child development highlights the significant role parents have in determining their children's emotional, cognitive, social, and behavioral trajectories. Key findings indicate that the authoritative parenting model optimally supports a child's growth, while permissive, negligent, and authoritarian parenting styles provide mixed or adverse outcomes. Imposing this link via various approaches facilitates reasonable generalizations and conclusions, since cultural and socioeconomic disparities, along with the interaction between parenting and other elements such as peer groups, educational environments, and media, complicate this relationship. The contemporary challenges and complexities, such as the integration of technology into daily life, the demands of working parents, and mental health concerns among parents, underscore that parenting is a dynamic process.

Recommendations for Subsequent Research Proposals for future research directions may be articulated:

Integration of Technology: Future research should examine how parents use technology to impact developmental outcomes, including the function of digital tools in communication, education, and oversight (Jeong et al. 2021). The organization propose that parenting treatments may be improved by using technological solutions, such as mobile apps, to increase accessibility and effectiveness (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2025) .

Longitudinal Studies: There is an urgent need for longitudinal research that monitors the enduring impacts of parenting approaches on child development across various life stages. Such research would provide profound insights into the impact of early parenting on subsequent outcomes in adolescence and adulthood (Frosch et al. (2021). The team promote longitudinal methodologies to enhance the comprehension of relationship health and its developmental consequences throughout time(Caprics Learning Lab, 2023)

Cross-Cultural Comparisons: Engaging in cross-cultural comparisons is essential for confronting the cultural biases prevalent in the literature. Future studies need to investigate parenting styles and child outcomes in non-Western environments to enhance the knowledge of global parenting practices (Morawska ,2020). It underscores the need of examining culturally distinct parenting approaches, particularly in collectivist settings,



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to expand the breadth of current frameworks (INC., 2023) .

Interdisciplinary Methodologies: Interdisciplinary study integrating sociology, neurology, and education may provide comprehensive insights on parenting. Big data analytics and neurodevelopmental tools, as proposed (Cano, 2022). It provide exciting opportunities for elucidating intricate linkages between parenting and child development (Liverpool et al., 2021).

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