

# The impact of group training about parenting styles on maternal attitudes toward parenting styles

Zahra Zandiyeh, Elaheh Zare, Batool Hedayati

Department of Health Nursing, School of Nursing and Midwifery, Isfahan University of Medical Sciences, Isfahan, Iran

## ABSTRACT

**Background:** Parenting style is one of the most important and effective factors in training and growth of children and adolescents and the method that parents communicate with their children is an effective factor on family contact models. **Objectives:** The aim of this study was to determine the impact of group training about parenting styles on maternal attitudes that were admitted to Isfahan Imam Ali (AS) health care center in 2013. **Materials and Methods:** This was an experimental study, which was conducted on a random sample of 25 mothers referred to this health care center. They were divided into two groups (experimental and control). The experimental group received five sessions of group training, and the control group received a booklet about parenting styles. The used tool in this study was the Bamerind Parenting Style Questionnaire that was completed by the mothers before and after the intervention and finally, their obtained scores were compared with each other. **Results:** The results of the present study showed that the mean score of attitude toward easy-going style in test group was less than the control group after intervention ( $P = 0.045$ ). The mean score of attitude toward authoritative style in the experimental group was less than control group after intervention ( $P = 0.037$ ) and the mean score of attitude toward authoritative style in the experimental group was more than the control group after intervention ( $P = 0.011$ ). **Conclusions:** Group training can be an appropriate method in changing maternal attitudes toward parenting styles.

**Key words:** Group training, maternal attitude, parenting style

## INTRODUCTION

Family is the most fundamental institution for preparing sociable children and especially in their first critical years of life. In fact, in the family, the children are taught that what is right and what is wrong. Naturally, family has a significant role in the formation of character and the child's behavior.<sup>[1]</sup> Educational model is an important and impressive factor in rearing the children and adolescents. Bamerind distinguished between three parenting styles including authoritative, sovereign, and easy-going styles. The authoritative parenting style is determined by strict and inflexible behaviors. On

the other hand, authoritative parents insist on autonomy of children in the range of family regulations. Easy-going parents do not follow certain rules in upbringing of children. They have no control on their actions and behaviors.<sup>[2]</sup> Researches on traumatized children have shown that many families use undesirable educational practices, which were the sources of fear, mistrust, dissatisfaction feeling, pessimism, and anxiety in children. The results of Tan *et al.* study with the aim of considering the relationship between parenting style family stress and behavioral adaptation in pre-school aged children in China indicated that compliant mothers had lower household stress compared with authoritative parenting style with fewer behavioral problems in their children.<sup>[3]</sup> Families utilize different parenting styles in raising their children. Parenting styles are methods and relatively stable patterns

**Address for correspondence:** Dr. Zahra Zandiyeh, Department of Health Nursing, School of Nursing and Midwifery, Isfahan University of Medical Sciences, Isfahan, Iran. E-mail: zandiyeh@nm.mui.ac.ir

### Access this article online

#### Quick Response Code:



**Website:**  
[www.jehp.net](http://www.jehp.net)

**DOI:**  
10.4103/2277-9531.171798

This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 License, which allows others to remix, tweak, and build upon the work non-commercially, as long as the author is credited and the new creations are licensed under the identical terms.

**For reprints contact:** reprints@medknow.com

**This article may be cited as:** Zandiyeh Z, Zare E, Hedayati B. The impact of group training about parenting styles on maternal attitudes toward parenting styles. *J Edu Health Promot* 2015;4:85.

of parents for the relationship between family members. They provide an impressive stream and impressionable interaction.<sup>[4]</sup> No society can make health claims without having healthy families. Several studies have shown that there was no significant relationship among different styles of parenting, health of children, and the formation of their character. For example, in the study of Khajeh pour with the aim of comparing parenting styles with identity style of male and female students at the pre-university level in four areas of Shiraz was shown that according to the identity styles, there was a significant difference between parenting styles and there was also a significant relationship between parenting styles and gender. On the other hand, there was no significant difference between identity styles according to social class. However, there was a significant relationship between parenting styles and social class. Therefore, (1) There was a significant difference between parenting styles according to identity styles, (2) there was a significant difference only in early identification between girls and boys, (3) there was a significant relationship between parenting styles and gender, (4) there were no significant differences between identity styles due to social class, (5) there was a significant relationship between parenting styles and social class and (6) there was a significant relationship between parenting styles dimensions and identity styles.<sup>[5]</sup> In the study of Mazidi and Alborzi with the purpose of considering the relationship between children's self-concept and parenting styles was shown that there was a significant positive correlation between the subjects' self-perception, a warm family environment and flexible support.<sup>[6]</sup> Study of Huver *et al.* was conducted in Germany with the purpose of checking out the links between teenagers' parental personality and their parenting styles. The results showed that two aspects of the character, which were the reflection of interpersonal relations (extroversion and consistency), have been mostly associated with supportive style of greater emotional balance. It was associated with reducing the excessive control with regard to leadership, extroversion, consistency styles, and emotional balance style had the most probability for authoritative parents. Conscientiousness and openness generally had no connection with parenting. Although that they were linked to specific acts of parenting.<sup>[7]</sup> Study of Ozer was conducted in California with the aim of considering the relationship among parenting styles, symptoms of depression, and drug use in adolescents. The results showed that the children of those parents who mostly accept them and had less strict controls on them had fewer depressive symptoms. More acceptances of mothers were associated with less alcohol and marijuana abuse in adolescents. Much control on children was not a good predictor for drug abuse. In general, the acceptance of parents as a constant factor in a balanced relationship between parents and children is considered in their mental health.<sup>[8]</sup> According to the cited studies, the importance of parents understanding about the correct style of parenting is immense and if they are unaware of the correct style and apply the wrong style, its long-term and destructive effects endanger the health of a community. Among the existing educational methods, group training method for people with

common interests was the easiest and the most applicable method for the studied population. Group discussion gives an opportunity to the people for representing their mental issues. People can talk about their problems and then, they will be able to request cooperation from other members of the group for assistance and suggestions. When group members are trying to solve the problem and change their behaviors, they provide the necessary support and encouragement. Group support is a key factor to contribute to decision making.<sup>[9]</sup> Wide range of impacts of different methods of parenting is very vast and needs special policy of the country officials of mental health system. Since, according to the researcher studies among the articles, there was not enough researches about effective practices to teach parenting styles to the parents and most of studies have only paid attention to the results of parenting styles on children and attention to this issue that increasing of knowledge and changing of attitudes could lead to changes in behavior and as well, the researcher's observations in the study environment and based on the increased need of parents and especially the mothers to learn about appropriate parenting styles, rearing of children, and lack of education in this regard in health care facilities, there is a strong need to educate parents about parenting styles and finding the best and the most applicable training method. Therefore, the researcher has noticed to the motto of "prevention is better than cure." The role of community health nurses in training and awareness of different groups in the society is very important about health behaviors and relying on the knowledge and skills of community health nurses in their educational role. On the other hand, mothers have significant roles in the training of their children and are more connected to them than their fathers at home. They also have more time compared with fathers to participate in such trainings with more cooperation. Therefore, given the importance of parents' understanding about the correct way to raise the children, to have healthy children, having a healthy community, and the important role of community health nurses in teaching families to guide them for acquisition of public health (physical, mental and social health), the present study was carried out to determine the impact of group training methods on maternal attitudes about parenting styles.

## METHODS

This analytical and field trial study was performed as pre-test and post-test in the Health Center of Imam Ali (AS) in Isfahan. The center has been selected due to its availability and large size of the covered population. The inclusion criteria were, respectively, the mothers that: Playing the women's roles in the family as the mother and involvement in raising the children, having children with 0–12 years old, capable of reading and writing and desire to participate in all training sessions. The exclusion criteria were included absence in more than two sessions, displacement of the family living, withdrawal of medical family records from the health center and loss of the subject for any reasons during the study. Sampling was carried out randomly within 1 week among

attending women to the Clinic of Imam Ali (AS) in Isfahan, matching with inclusion criteria and according to the statistics consultant viewpoint up to a total of 25 mothers. Then, the whole samples using the table of random numbers were divided into experimental and control groups. Informed consent was obtained from all entered members into the study. Sampling was performed among the qualified mothers for the inclusion. Then, the subjects were informed about the project and its purpose. The experimental group participated in training sessions for 5 weeks and each week by one 45-min session with group discussion about parenting styles. The control group was given a booklet about the mentioned subject. For training of the experimental group, it was used group discussion, speech, questions and answers sessions, and educational aids such as whiteboard, PowerPoint documents, and written pamphlets were also used for better learning. Educational content was included discussions about the three different styles of parenting (sovereign, easy-going, and authoritarian). The collected materials were from scientific resources in the context of parenting.<sup>[10,11]</sup> At the beginning of each session, it was requested from the participants to express their knowledge, experiences, and comments about examples of their situation. After providing training materials, at the end of each session, they were asked to be prepared for the next session about discussed parenting styles, their experiences and applying better practices for discussion with group members. In order to collect data, two questionnaires were used, demographic characteristics questionnaire and Bamerind parenting style questionnaire with 30 questions including questions about the three parenting styles (authoritarian, sovereign, and easy-going). Scoring of the questions was carried out by using the Likert's scale. This questionnaire was completed before and after the intervention by the participants. Then, the obtained scores from them were compared with each other. Bamerind parenting style questionnaire, which has been developed based on the theory of Bamerind about the three styles of parenting, was included 30 expressions (10 expressions were allocated for each style of parenting). This questionnaire has been examined in several studies, and its reliability and validity have been obtained by Boron. The reliability of the questionnaire using test-retest reliability among the mothers group was 0.81 for easy-going style, 0.86 for an authoritarian style and 0.78 for rational authority style. Among the fathers group, it was 0.78, 0.85 and 0.88 for easy-going, authoritarian, and rational authority styles, respectively. Content validity was confirmed by 10 psychology and psychiatry experts. In general, the obtained results from foreign and domestic researches confirmed the validity of the parental styles questionnaire.<sup>[11]</sup> Its internal validity by calculating Cronbach's alpha for the correlation of the expressed questions was 0.64 for easy-going style, 0.72 for an authoritarian style and 0.79 for rational authority style.<sup>[4]</sup> The mean of the obtained scores from the questionnaires, before and after the study was compared in both groups. Data were analyzed by SPSS statistical software, Chicago, IL, USA, descriptive statistics (mean,  $\pm$  SD, etc.), and analytical statistics (*t*-test, Chi-square, Mann-Whitney, and Wilcoxon).

## RESULTS

After analyzing the data, the findings indicated that the mean of age, spouse age, and number of children in the two groups were 30.3, 35.4, and 1.76, respectively. Mann-Whitney test showed that there was no significant difference between the two groups in the mean age ( $P = 0.72$ ), spouse's age ( $P = 0.9$ ) and number of children ( $P = 0.85$ ) (two groups were matched in this regard). Frequency distribution of educational level in the two groups showed that in the intervention group, 92.3% of people had under diploma and diploma education, and 7.7% had bachelor's and higher degree. In the control group, 91.7% had less than a diploma and diploma education and 8.3% had an associate degree. Mann-Whitney test showed that there was no significant difference in both groups in terms of educational level ( $P = 0.98$ ). Frequency distribution of husbands' educational levels in the two groups showed that in the intervention and control groups, 92.3 and 91.7% of them, respectively, had under diploma and diploma education, 7.7% in the intervention group had an associate degree and 8.3% had a bachelor or higher degree in the control group. Mann-Whitney test showed that there was no significant difference in the spouse's educational level in the two groups ( $P = 0.98$ ). In terms of economic status, in the intervention and control groups, 15.4 and 25%, respectively, had low economic status, 76.9 and 58.3% had medium economic status and 7.7 and 16.7% had good economic situation. Mann-Whitney test showed that there was no significant difference regarding the economic status in the two groups ( $P = 0.97$ ). All participants were housewives. Regarding the frequency distribution of employment status of husbands in the intervention group, 100% of the husbands were employed, and 91.7% were employed and the rest were unemployed in the control group. Fisher's exact test showed that there was no significant difference in the employment status of spouses in the two groups ( $P = 0.48$ ). The mean score of attitude to easy-going style in the control group, before and after the intervention were 28.8 and 28.4, respectively. Wilcoxon test showed that in the control group, before and after the intervention, there was no significant difference in the mean score of attitude to easy-going style ( $P = 0.634$ ). However, in the intervention group, the mean scores of attitude to easy-going style, before and after the intervention were 28.1 and 24.5, respectively. Wilcoxon test showed that the mean score of attitude to easy-going style, after the intervention compared with before the intervention had decreased significantly ( $P = 0.01$ ). Mann-Whitney test showed that there was no significant difference in the mean score of attitude to easy-going style before the intervention between the two groups ( $P = 0.72$ ). After the intervention, there was no significant difference in both groups in this respect with each other (mean score of attitude to easy-going style after the intervention in the experimental group was less than the control group) ( $P = 0.045$ ) [Table 1]. The mean attitude score to the autocratic style in the control group, before and after intervention was 24.5 and 24.2, respectively. Wilcoxon test showed that in the control group, before and after the intervention, there was no significant difference in the mean

score of attitude to the authoritarian style ( $P = 0.76$ ). In the intervention group, the mean attitude score to the autocratic style, before and after the intervention was 24.6 and 19.9, respectively. Wilcoxon test showed that the mean attitude score to the authoritarian style after the intervention compared with before the intervention had decreased significantly ( $P = 0.008$ ). Mann–Whitney test showed that there was no significant difference in the mean attitude score to the authoritarian style before the intervention between the two groups ( $P = 0.81$ ). However, there was a significant difference after the intervention in both groups in this regard with each other (the mean score of attitude to authoritarian style after the intervention was lower in the intervention group than the control group) ( $P = 0.037$ ) [Table 2]. The mean attitude scores to rational authority style in the control group, before and after intervention were 40.58 and 40.50, respectively. Wilcoxon test showed that in the control group, before and after the intervention, there was no significant difference in the mean attitude score to rational authority style ( $P = 0.531$ ). In the intervention group, the mean score of attitude to rational authority style, before and after the intervention was 40.61 and 44.50, respectively. Wilcoxon test showed that the mean of this score was enhanced significantly after the intervention compared with before the intervention ( $P = 0.015$ ). Mann–Whitney test showed that in the mean score of attitude to rational authority style, there was no significant difference before the intervention between the two groups ( $P = 0.936$ ). After the intervention, there was a significant difference in both groups in this regard with each other (the mean score of attitude to rational authority style after intervention was greater in the intervention group than the control group) ( $P = 0.011$ ) [Table 3].

## DISCUSSION

Educational model is an important and influential factor in rearing the children and adolescents. Parental attitude toward child rearing practices is an influential factor for family interaction models. The importance of parents understanding about the correct style of parenting is very high and if they are unaware of the correct style and apply the wrong style, it has long-term and destructive effects, which endangers the health of a community. The method of the parental relationship with the children is the strongest factor influencing family interaction models and particularly in the periods of a children’s life to pass the psychological growth fundamental changes.<sup>[4]</sup> Therefore, the need for proper training of child-rearing practices to the parents is felt here. Among the existing training methods, group training method for a group of people with common purpose and interests and also for the present study population has been the easiest and the most applicable method. Choosing the mothers group in this study was due to further cooperation of mothers to attend training sessions and spending more time with children at home. Therefore, this study was conducted with the aim of determining the impact of a training intervention on maternal attitude about parenting styles. The results of the present study showed that training intervention has been

**Table 1: Comparison of the mean score of easy-going style before and after the intervention in both intervention and control groups**

Time	Intervention group		Control group		Independent t-test result	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	t	P
Before the intervention	28.1	5.9	28.8	5.2	0.34	0.74
After the intervention	24.5	6.7	28.4	4.5	1.99	0.049
Independent t-test result						
T	3/4		0.44			
P	0.001		0.67			

SD=Standard deviation

**Table 2: Comparison of the mean score of the authoritarian style before and after the intervention in both intervention and control groups**

Time	Intervention group		Control group		Independent t-test result	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	T	P
Before the intervention	24.6	5.2	24.5	5.2	0.05	0.96
After the intervention	19.9	5.1	24.2	5.4	2.05	0.04
Independent t-test result						
T	3.84		0.29			
P	0.002		0.77			

SD=Standard deviation

**Table 3: Comparison of the mean score of rational authority style before and after the intervention in both intervention and control groups**

Time	Intervention group		Control group		Independent t-test result	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	t	P
Before the intervention	40.61	4.0	40.58	3.5	0.002	0.98
After the intervention	44.5	4.4	40.50	2.4	2.82	0.01
Independent t-test result						
t	3.24		0.1			
P	0.007		0.92			

SD=Standard deviation

effective significantly to change the attitudes about parenting styles. The scores of mothers in the intervention group about the logical authoritarian parenting (optimal parenting style) have been significantly improved after training compared to before it. Similar studies have also shown that training can be an appropriate intervention to improve the knowledge and parental attitudes about the correct style of rearing the children. The study of Kheirieh *et al.* was carried out with the aim of evaluation of the effectiveness of positive parenting training methods on 6–7 years old children with defiant coping disorder. The results showed that the signs of defiant coping were significantly reduced in the children of trained mothers.<sup>[11]</sup> In the study of Tehrani Doost *et al.* was conducted with the aim of evaluation of the impact of constructive training of the children to the parents in reducing behavioral problems in children. The results showed that these training interventions could be effective in different fields such as abilities and problems of children,

parenting scales and being a parent, indicators of depression, anxiety, and stress in the parent's function.<sup>[12]</sup> Parenting styles are associated with variables such as incentive promotion for education, depression, and restraint in children.<sup>[11]</sup> Applied methods by parents in training their children are divided into three categories of easy-going, authoritarian, and democratic-reasonable. In the easy-going style, the parents allow the children to do whatever they love to do without any supervision on their actions. In authoritarian style, is mainly based on parental opinion and the child has no right to make any comments and otherwise, the child will be punished by the parents. In a democratic style, the parents are logically monitoring the children actions and in appropriate situations, they are allowed to comment on them.<sup>[13]</sup> The study of Garcia (2009) was performed in Spain with the aim of reviewing the selection of parenting style with more favorable results in adolescents' behaviors. The results showed that authoritarian leadership style has been associated with more favorable outcomes in adolescents' behaviors compared with two other styles.<sup>[14]</sup> Therefore, the importance of parents understanding about the correct parenting style is very high and if they are unaware of the right method and applying the wrong style has long-term and destructive effects in endangering the health of the community. No society can have health claims without healthy families. Family is the most fundamental institution for familiarization of the children with the society and especially in the first critical years of their life. In fact, in the family, children learn that what is right and what is wrong. Naturally, the family has a significant role in the formation of the child's character and behavior.<sup>[13]</sup> According to the obtained results of the present study and similar studies, it could be concluded that group training intervention for the mothers was effective to change their attitudes toward the optimal parenting styles. At the end, it is suggested that similar studies should be conducted at the broader context, more samples, longer period of time, and participating of fathers along with the mothers in training sessions in order to improve the generalizability of the findings.

### Acknowledgment

The present study was the result of a research project entitled "the impact of group training about parenting styles on maternal attitudes of admitted mothers to the Clinic of Imam Ali (AS) in Isfahan in 2012" (No. 292076). This study has been conducted with the financial sponsorship of Vice Chancellor for Research of Isfahan University of Medical Sciences, academic support of the teachers of Faculty of Nursing of Isfahan University of Medical Sciences and collaboration of the management and staff of Clinic of Imam

Ali (AS) in Isfahan. Hereby, it would be appreciated the cooperation and support of all of these loved ones.

### Financial support and sponsorship

Department of Health Nursing, Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery, Isfahan University of Medical Sciences, Isfahan, Iran.

### Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

## REFERENCES

1. Pedram A, Desirable and Undesirable Behavior in Children and Adolescents. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Isfahan: Kiarad Publication; 2010.
2. Asadi M, Zakaei N, Kaviani H, Mohammadi M, Gohari M, The Relationship Between Socio-Cultural Context, Parenting Style, Educational Success and Learning Styles of Children, Journal Of Clinical Psychology And Psychiatry, 2003, Vol 1, No. 12, 21-8.
3. Tan TX, Camras LA, Deng H, Zhang M, Lu Z. Family stress, parenting styles, and behavioral adjustment in preschool-age adopted Chinese girls. *Early Child Res Q* 2012;27:128-36.
4. Sadrosadat SJ, Esfandabad HS, Pour SE. Comparison of family functioning and parenting practices in families of irresponsible behavior and general disorder. *Shahrekord Univ Med Sci* 2003; Vol. 7, No. 2:43-8.
5. Khajehpoor M, Attar M, Compared with identity and examine parenting practices in relation to male and female students in pre-university education in four areas of the city of Shiraz, *Journal of Studies in Education and Psychology, Mashhad* 2007; Vol 1, 178-97
6. Mazidi M, Alborz M. Examined the relationship between parenting practices and children's self-concept. *Mod Educ Thought* 2009;5:9-24.
7. Huver RM, Otten R, de Vries H, Engels RC. Personality and parenting style in parents of adolescents. *J Adolesc* 2010;33:395-402.
8. Ozer E, Flores E, Tschann JY. Parenting style, depressive symptoms and drug use in Mexican American adolescents, *Journal Of Youth And Society*, September 2013, Vol. 45, No. 3, 365-88
9. Dennis KT, Stanly JB. *Mass Communication Theory*, Wandsworth, Canada; 2003
10. Garber, *How to treat with my child*, Khazali Shahin, Morvarid publication, 24<sup>th</sup> edition, 2007
11. Kheirieh M, Shaeiri M.R, Azad Fallah P, Rasolzadeh Tabatbaei K. Effectiveness of the triple p-positive parenting program on children with oppositional defiant disorder *Journal of Behavioral Science* 2009;, Vol. 3, No. 1, 53-8.
12. Tehrani Doost M, shahrivar M, mahmudi gharaei J, alghband rad J, Efficacy of positive parenting on improving children behavior problems and parenting styles, *Iranian Journal Of Psychiatry And Clinical Psychology*, Sage Publication, New York, Vol. 14, No. 4, Winter 2009, 371-9.
13. Zarei I. The alleged relationship between parenting practices on adolescent risk behaviors scale. *Special Meeting of high risk behavior Martyr Yazd Univ Med Sci J* 2010;18:220-4.
14. García F, Gracia E. Is always authoritative the optimum parenting style? Evidence from Spanish families. *Adolescence* 2009;44:101-31.