

Relationship Between Moral Identity and Parenting Styles on Prosocial Behavior among Youth in Selangor, Malaysia

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Abstract

This study investigates the influence of parenting styles, namely authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive, as well as moral identity, on the growth of altruism in young individuals. Gathering data from a broad sample of volunteers, a quantitative technique was used to analyse the influence of several factors on altruistic behaviours. The study utilised regression analysis to examine the predictive efficacy of each parenting style and moral identity on altruism, offering a nuanced comprehension of the interplay between these factors within a socio-cultural framework. The results indicate that both authoritarian and permissive parenting styles have a significant correlation with the cultivation of altruistic behaviour in young individuals. Contrary to expectations based on Western research, this study found no significant relationship between the authoritative parenting style and altruistic behaviours. Similarly, this study did not find a significant relationship between moral identity and altruism, indicating that the influence of personal moral standards may be intricate and influenced by unaccounted factors. The findings highlight the importance of cultural context in influencing the efficacy of different parenting approaches. According to this study, both authoritarian and permissive parenting styles can promote altruistic behaviour. However, the specific ways in which these styles influence prosocial behaviour may vary depending on cultural norms and particular family dynamics. These findings question the idea that authoritarian parenting is universally the most successful style and emphasise the importance of considering cultural factors when studying the development of compassion. This study adds to the wider discussion on moral development and parenting, urging for additional research on the interplay between specific elements of parenting and individual moral identity in shaping prosocial behaviours such as altruism. These insights are essential for creating customised

educational and parental practices that effectively encourage altruistic behaviours in various cultural contexts.

Keywords: Parenting styles, Altruism, Moral Identity, Cultural Context, Youth

Introduction

Prosocial behaviours, which include acts such as helping, sharing, and understanding others' emotions, are crucial for upholding the social cohesion of any group. These behaviours have a substantial impact on the personal growth and social integration of teenagers. Recent research emphasises that the prosocial behaviour of young people is significantly influenced by intrinsic characteristics such as moral identity, which refers to the incorporation of moral principles as a fundamental component of one's self-image (Hardy & Carlo, 2021).

Parenting styles, which can be described in terms of levels of affection, control, and interaction, have a substantial influence on the ethical growth and behavioural consequences in children (Grusec, 2020). In multicultural cultures such as Malaysia, particularly in a fast-progressing region like Selangor, these patterns might exhibit significant variations, influencing the conduct of young individuals among various populations. Comprehending the subtle distinctions of these variables is essential for creating culturally suitable educational and parental assistance programmes.

Studies have shown that moral identity plays a role in influencing the connection between parenting approaches and prosocial behaviour. Aquino and Reed (2020) discovered that children who possess a more robust moral identity are inclined to display prosocial behaviours, regardless of their parenting style. However, there is limited knowledge regarding the specific ways in which these dynamics unfold in the Malaysian setting, where community and familial connections have a crucial influence on shaping individual behaviours. Moreover, the impact of socio-economic issues on parenting techniques and, consequently, on youth behaviour should not be ignored. Selangor, as Malaysia's most populous and economically developed state, provides a distinct environment where economic inequalities are prominent. The existence of these differences can have an impact on the availability and approaches of parenting resources, consequently influencing the formation of moral identity and the display of prosocial behaviours in young individuals (Liu et al., 2021).

The primary objective of this study is to address the existing vacuum in the literature by examining the relationship between moral identity, different parenting methods, and their combined impact on the development of prosocial behaviour in teenagers residing in Selangor. This project aims to gain a detailed understanding of the dynamics related to Southeast Asian adolescents and their behavioural development by using a combination of different research methods. This will contribute to the limited existing literature on this topic. This research holds importance that goes beyond the realm of academia. The findings could provide guidance for the creation of specific treatments to promote prosocial behaviour among Malaysian youth by clarifying the connections between parenting methods, moral identity, and prosocial behaviour. These interventions could be customised to fit the distinct cultural and economic conditions of Selangor, perhaps serving as a prototype for comparable projects in other regions of Asia.

Furthermore, the results of this study are anticipated to offer practical and valuable insights for parents, educators, and policymakers in Selangor and other areas. By comprehending the significance of moral identity and parenting in influencing youth behaviour, one can devise measures to improve these elements, therefore fostering a more unified and nurturing communal setting for the growth of young individuals.

In light of the above concerns, this study aims to look at the relationship between moral identity and parenting styles on prosocial behavior with specific research questions as follows:

1. What is the level of moral identity, parenting styles (authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive) on prosocial behavior?
2. Is there any relationship between moral identity and parenting styles on prosocial behavior among youth in Selangor, Malaysia?
3. What are the unique predictors of prosocial behavior among youth in Selangor, Malaysia?

Defining Prosocial Behavior: Theoretical Perspectives

Prosocial behaviour refers to a variety of voluntary actions that are designed to assist others. These behaviours encompass actions such as assisting, collaborating, demonstrating concern, and offering one's services without compensation. Prosocial behaviours are essential for maintaining social unity and are associated with a wide range of good developmental consequences. These behaviours can boost self-esteem, promote academic achievement, and alleviate symptoms of depression and anxiety in adolescents. Adolescence is a crucial time for young people to develop their sense of identity and integrate into society. Engaging in prosocial behaviour at this period helps them establish their roles within their communities and traverse the complexities of social surroundings (Eisenberg, Spinrad, & Knafo-Noam, 2015).

Prosocial behaviour is shaped by many theoretical frameworks that offer insights into the acquisition and long-term maintenance of these behaviours. The Social Learning Theory, introduced by Bandura (1977), posits that individuals acquire prosocial behaviour by observing and imitating others, particularly influential role models like parents and peers. According to this hypothesis, the act of witnessing others getting rewarded for engaging in prosocial behaviour serves as an incentive for the spectator to exhibit comparable behaviour. This highlights the significance of the social environment in promoting prosocial behaviours among young people.

Prosocial behaviour can be better understood by focusing on cognitive and emotional changes from the perspective of developmental psychology. The Cognitive Developmental Theory, initially proposed by Piaget and further developed by Kohlberg, posits that as children's cognitive capacities advance, they enhance their comprehension of others' viewpoints and requirements, hence promoting sympathetic reactions and prosocial behaviours (Kohlberg, 1984). In addition, Eisenberg and her colleagues have specifically concentrated on studying empathy-related responses. They propose that the cultivation of empathy and moral reasoning is essential for individuals to engage in prosocial behaviour. As youngsters develop, their improved capacity to understand and share the feelings and circumstances of others amplifies their inclination to engage in prosocial behaviour (Eisenberg, 2000).

Evolutionary psychology proposes that prosocial behaviours may have evolved due to their ability to confer evolutionary benefits, such as promoting group unity and cooperation,

ultimately resulting in increased chances of survival and reproductive success. Research has shown that even young toddlers have a natural inclination to help and cooperate with others, suggesting that prosocial behaviour may have an underlying foundation (Tomasello, Carpenter, Call, Behne, & Moll, 2005).

Moral Identity: Conceptualization and Impact

Moral identity pertains to the extent to which being a moral individual is fundamental to one's self-conception. Aquino and Reed (2002) propose that moral identity consists of two key elements: internalisation and symbolization. Internalisation pertains to the inward acceptance of moral characteristics, while symbolization involves the outward manifestation of same characteristics. The dual-component approach highlights that an individual's moral identity not only affects their personal behaviour but also has an impact on their social interactions and perceptions (Aquino & Reed, 2002).

Moral identity is derived from social cognitive theory, which suggests that individuals manage their behaviour by engaging in self-reflective and evaluative processes that involve moral self-conceptions. According to Blasi (1984), moral identity functions as a self-regulating system that aligns moral behaviours with an individual's self-defined values and beliefs. According to this theoretical perspective, having a strong moral identity not only affects how people make ethical decisions, but also helps them align their ideals with their actions that will promote behaviours that are morally upright.

Empirical study has definitively proven a strong correlation between moral identity and prosocial behaviours. Research conducted by Hardy and Carlo (2011) indicates that teenagers who have a well-established moral identity are more likely to engage in prosocial behaviours, such as assisting others, sharing resources, and participating in volunteer activities. These behaviours are thought to originate from the individual's urge to behave in accordance with their moral self-concept, which encompasses qualities such as fairness, compassion, and kindness. Additional research emphasises the significance of moral identity in the growth and maturation of young individuals. An example of this is a longitudinal study conducted by Padilla-Walker et al. (2017), which found that adolescents who have a more robust sense of moral identity are less likely to participate in dangerous behaviours and more likely to engage in prosocial activities. This discovery provides evidence for the idea that moral identity can have a significant impact on shaping the developmental paths of young individuals, favourably influencing their social choices and interactions (Padilla-Walker et al., 2017).

Recent research further investigating the intricacies of how moral identity influences behaviour in various situations. Hertz and Krettenauer (2016) conducted study examining the impact of moral identity on several social behaviours, including prosocial behaviours, civic participation, and environmental stewardship. The research indicates that moral identity has the potential to impact not only individual relationships but also larger societal activities (Hertz & Krettenauer, 2016).

Moral Identity and Parenting Styles on Prosocial Behavior

Recent research has initiated an investigation into the complex connection between moral identity and parenting methods, specifically how they jointly influence prosocial behaviours in young individuals. Parenting styles, such as authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and uninvolved, have a significant impact on the moral framework in which a child's personality forms. The study conducted by Padilla-Walker and Thompson (2015) discovered that authoritative parenting, which is defined by displaying warmth, providing support, and setting

clear boundaries, positively influences the formation of a robust moral identity. This, in turn, promotes the development of prosocial behaviours such as empathy and altruism. Parenting styles have been offered by theoretical models as mechanisms that influence the development of a child's moral identity. Grusec and Goodnow (1994) suggest that parenting approaches characterised by open communication and clear explanations of behavioural standards are more likely to be internalised by children, leading to the integration of these moral principles into their self-concept. This process is considered crucial in the formation of moral identity, since youngsters internalise and give importance to moral principles that align with their self-conception as moral individuals. These theoretical propositions are supported by empirical evidence. A study conducted by Pratt, Arnold, Pratt, and Diessner (2016) revealed that children who are reared in circumstances where they get consistent moral direction, which is commonly found in authoritative households, are more inclined to acquire a strong moral identity. This development is strongly correlated with elevated levels of prosocial behaviour, as these youngsters demonstrate a heightened sensitivity to the needs of others and a greater dedication to moral values in their acts.

Subsequent research has investigated how these interactions manifest in different cultural settings, suggesting that the impact of parenting techniques on moral identity and prosocial behaviour may differ among other nations. Carlo et al. (2011) discovered that in collectivist cultures, the importance placed on familial and societal duties within the parenting structure has a significant effect on how moral identity influences prosocial behaviours. This differs from individualistic societies, where personal moral beliefs may have a greater influence. Current advancements in the subject indicate an increasing curiosity in exploring the intricacies of how particular parenting methods impact the many aspects of moral identity and, consequently, prosocial behaviour. Future research could be enhanced by doing longitudinal studies that monitor these interactions over an extended period, so yielding more profound understanding of the causal mechanisms and the opportunity for focused interventions. Incorporating contemporary psychological frameworks, such as ecological systems theory, can offer a more comprehensive comprehension of these interactions within wider social and environmental contexts (Kiang, Glatz, & Buchanan, 2017).

Method

Participants

The study included a total of 396 individuals. The sample exhibits a greater proportion of females (60.6%) in comparison to males (39.4%). The age distribution indicates that the majority, specifically 61.6%, fall between the age range of 20 to 24 years old. The age group of 15 to 19 years accounts for 22.0% of the sample, while the age group of 25 to 30 years makes up 16.4% of the sample. Regarding ethnic composition, Malays constitute the majority, at 71.5% of the participants, followed by Chinese at 17.2%, and Indians at 11.4%. Approximately 47.0% of the participants indicated a household income below RM5,251, while 39.1% reported incomes between RM5,251 and RM11,819, and 13.9% earned above RM11,819. In terms of geography, 52.8% of the participants live in urban areas, 40.9% in suburban areas, and 6.3% in rural areas.

Procedure and Measures

Participants were selected by a homogeneous convenience sample method, which ensured that respondents were easily accessible and available. The ultimate sample size was decided to be 396 young individuals, calculated to strike a harmonious balance between statistical

power and practical feasibility. A digital survey was generated using Google Forms, encompassing areas for demographic data, moral identity, parenting techniques, and prosocial behaviour. The selection of this method was based on its convenience, since it enables participants to complete the survey at their preferred speed while ensuring their anonymity, hence minimising response biases. Prior to their participation, all participants were sent an information sheet via email that outlined the study's objectives, the confidential nature of the response procedure, and the voluntary aspect of their involvement. Prior to accessing the questionnaire, participants were required to provide informed consent electronically. The collected data were examined using statistical software. Quantitative analyses, such as descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression analyses, were conducted to examine the links and effects of moral identity and parenting styles on prosocial behaviour.

Moral Identity

The Self-Importance of Moral Identity Scale (SIMI), created by Aquino and Reed in 2002, is used to assess how individuals view the importance of moral characteristics in their own self-image. This self-report questionnaire consists of 13 items that participants assess using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree"). The SIMI assesses the degree to which individuals see moral attributes, such as caring, compassionate, fair, friendly, generous, helpful, hardworking, honest, and kind, as fundamental and crucial to their sense of self and emotional welfare. Some examples of statements are: "Having these characteristics would bring me emotional satisfaction," "Possessing these characteristics is integral to my identity," and "My emotional well-being is heavily dependent on having these characteristics." The scale is intended to examine the fundamental elements of moral identity by evaluating the extent to which these moral characteristics are ingrained in an individual's self-concept, demonstrating a comprehensive method for comprehending personal morality. The SIMI has consistently demonstrated dependability in multiple trials, as seen by high Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = .88$) values that indicate great internal consistency among its items.

Parenting Styles

The Parenting Style Inventory II (PSI-II), created by Darling and Toyokawa in 1997, is a measure specifically designed to evaluate individuals' impressions of their parents' parenting styles across multiple dimensions. The inventory consists of 15 items, and participants' responses are recorded on a 5-point Likert scale that ranges from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree"). The PSI-II accurately assesses crucial elements of parental interaction, including parental expectations (e.g., "My parent has high expectations for me to adhere to family rules"), responsiveness (e.g., "My parent is not very receptive when I share my problems with her"), and authoritarianism (e.g., "My parent asserts that her ideas are always right and discourages me from questioning them"). The PSI-II assesses various domains to get valuable insights into the diverse ways parents engage with their children, encompassing aspects such as rule enforcement, emotional support, and control. The dissertation study found that the PSI-II showed strong internal consistency, as indicated by a Cronbach's alpha of 0.647 for authoritarian parenting, 0.722 for authoritative parenting, and 0.841 for permissive parenting. This suggests that the measuring of distinct parenting styles was reliable.

Prosocial Behavior

The Prosociality Scale, created by Caprara et al. (2005), is a commonly employed tool for evaluating individuals' prosocial conduct. The purpose of this tool is to assess several aspects of prosocial behaviour, namely measuring the degree to which individuals participate in actions that are beneficial to others and contribute to the well-being of their social groupings. The scale comprises 16 items, and participants evaluate each topic using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The Prosociality Scale encompasses a wide spectrum of prosocial actions, such as assisting, sharing, collaborating, and empathising. The items evaluate both specific actions (such as "I am willing to assist my friends/colleagues in their tasks" and "I am willing to share my belongings with my friends") and broader inclinations towards helping others (such as "I make an effort to assist others" and "I feel compassion for those who are less fortunate than myself"). The reliability for this instrument was $\alpha = .85$.

Data Analysis

The study's quantitative data were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), specifically Version 29.0. The first step in data analysis consisted of applying descriptive statistics to summarise the demographic features of the participants and provide an overview of the data distribution. The initial analysis played a vital role in preparing for more detailed investigations of the dataset.

After conducting a descriptive study, Pearson correlation analyses was used to investigate the relationships between moral identity, different parenting styles (authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive), and prosocial behaviour among the young in Selangor. The selection of this statistical method was based on its ability to discover and quantify the magnitude and direction of the relationships between these important variables.

Multiple regression analyses were undertaken to further explore the impact of moral identity and various parenting methods on prosocial behaviour. The regression models yielded insights into the predictive efficacy of moral identity and each parenting style, elucidating the most salient aspects that contribute to the enhancement of prosocial behaviour within the cultural and social milieu of Selangor. The thorough methodology employed in this data analysis allowed for a rigorous investigation of the proposed connections and helped to a nuanced comprehension of the elements that promote prosocial behaviour among young people in Malaysia.

Results and Discussion

The results provided in Table 1 clarifies the levels of moral identity, parenting styles, and prosocial behaviour among the young population in Selangor. The examination of moral identity indicated a significantly high average score of 2.99 (SD = 0.112), with a considerable 98.7% of participants falling within the high category. This suggests a robust incorporation of moral principles into their self-perception.

The research presents intricate findings while analysing different parenting techniques. The average score for authoritarian parenting was 2.84 (SD = 0.369), and the majority of 83.8% of respondents reported high levels. This indicates that there is a high occurrence of rigorous parental control and elevated standards among the group being studied. The authoritative parenting style resulted in a mean score of 2.80 (SD = 0.459), with 82.6% of the participants also ranking it as high. This indicates a strong prevalence of a parenting approach that is both nurturing and demanding. The permissive parenting style exhibited a same pattern, with an

average score of 2.86 (SD = 0.344) and 86.4% of young individuals reporting elevated levels, suggesting a parenting method characterised by being attentive and having less expectations. In regards to prosocial behaviour, the average score was determined to be 2.97 (standard deviation = 0.157), and an impressive 97.5% of the participants reported high levels. This implies that behaviours such as assisting and collaborating are frequently demonstrated by young people, indicating a high level of social accountability and involvement in the community. These findings provide valuable insights into the social development of young people in Selangor. The elevated scores in moral identity and prosocial behaviour indicate a generation that highly esteems ethical behaviour and actively contributes to the community. The diversity in parenting styles in the region indicates different methods of raising children, each of which has the ability to impact the youth's prosocial attitudes and behaviours. The prevalence of high scores in these categories indicates that the participants are growing up in an environment with robust moral direction and support, which is likely responsible for the observed increase in prosocial behaviour.

Table 1
Level of Study Variables

| Level | n | % | Mean | SD |
|---------------------------|----------|----------|-------------|-----------|
| <u>Moral Identity</u> | | | 2.99 | 0.112 |
| Low (13 - 23) | 0 | 0 | | |
| Medium (24 - 34) | 5 | 1.3 | | |
| High (35 - 65) | 391 | 98.7 | | |
| <u>Parenting Style</u> | | | 2.84 | 0.369 |
| <i>Authoritarian</i> | | | | |
| Low (5 - 9) | 0 | 0 | | |
| Moderate (10 - 14) | 64 | 13.6 | | |
| High (15 - 20) | 332 | 83.8 | | |
| <i>Authoritative</i> | | | 2.80 | 0.459 |
| Low (5 - 9) | 10 | 2.5 | | |
| Moderate (10 - 14) | 59 | 14.9 | | |
| High (15 - 20) | 327 | 82.6 | | |
| <i>Permissive</i> | | | | |
| Low (5 - 9) | 0 | 0 | | |
| Medium (10 - 14) | 54 | 13.6 | | |
| High (15 - 20) | 342 | 86.4 | | |
| <u>Prosocial Behavior</u> | | | 2.97 | 0.157 |

| | | |
|-------------------|-----|------|
| Low (16 - 29) | 0 | 0 |
| Moderate (30 -43) | 10 | 2.5 |
| High (44 - 64) | 386 | 97.5 |

Based on Table 2, the correlational analysis conducted to explore the relationship between prosocial behavior and several independent variables revealed varied results. The association between prosocial behaviour and moral identity was not statistically significant ($r = -0.018$, $p > .05$), suggesting that there is no meaningful relationship between the two variables in this particular population. In contrast, the authoritarian parenting style had a modest although noteworthy positive connection with prosocial behaviour ($r = 0.148$, $p < .05$). This implies that a parenting strategy that is more controlling and emphasises rule enforcement is linked to elevated levels of prosocial behaviour in this particular group. Furthermore, there was a significant correlation between the permissive parenting style and prosocial behaviour ($r = 0.171$, $p < .05$), suggesting that a more liberal and tolerant approach to parenting is linked to increased prosocial behaviour.

Surprisingly, the parenting style characterised by authority, which involves a combination of high expectations and attentiveness, did not demonstrate a noteworthy correlation with prosocial behaviour ($r = -0.070$, $p > .05$). This implies that the impact of balanced parenting on prosocial behaviours may be intricate and maybe influenced by other factors that were not considered in this investigation. It is surprising that there is no linkage between moral identity and prosocial behaviour, considering that existing theoretical and empirical research frequently indicates a favourable connection between an individual's adherence to moral ideals and their inclination towards prosocial activities. This disparity could be ascribed to cultural variables, constraints in measurement, or the specific attributes of the sample.

The discovery that both authoritarian and permissive parenting styles have a favourable correlation with prosocial behaviour warrants a detailed and intricate examination. Within the cultural setting of Selangor, authoritarian parenting may be perceived as a means of being involved and caring, potentially promoting prosocial inclinations. The positive link with liberal parenting may indicate a situation where parents granting autonomy and freedom allow young people to engage more freely in prosocial behaviours.

These findings emphasise the significance of taking into account cultural and environmental variables when studying the elements that impact prosocial behaviour. Additionally, they emphasise that prosocial behaviour in young people can arise from various parenting environments, each contributing distinct dynamics to the formation of prosocial tendencies. Additional investigation is recommended to further examine these dynamics in greater detail, particularly to comprehend the reasons behind the lack of significant correlation between authoritative parenting and prosocial behaviour in this specific environment, which deviates from the predictions made by Western-centric developmental theories.

Table 2
Correlations among study variables

| Variable | Altruism | |
|-------------------------|----------|----------|
| | <i>r</i> | <i>p</i> |
| Moral Identity | -.018 | .312 |
| <i>Parenting Styles</i> | | |
| Authoritarian | .148** | .001 |
| Authoritative | -.070 | .121 |
| Permissive | .171** | .001 |

N = 396, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

The regression analysis conducted to evaluate the influence of various parenting styles on benevolence produced statistically significant findings. When examining the impact of authoritarian and permissive parenting styles on predicting altruistic behaviour, the model accounted for a significant amount of the variability.

The study found that the authoritarian parenting style was a strong predictor of altruistic behaviour, with a regression coefficient $B = .061$, a standard error (SE) of $.022$, a beta $\beta = .115$, and a p -value of less than $.001$. This finding suggests that for every one-unit rise in authoritarian parenting style, there is a corresponding increase in altruistic behaviour by 0.061 units, while taking into account other variables in the model. The permissive parenting style was found to have a substantial positive effect on altruism, as indicated by a larger regression coefficient ($B = .123$, $SE = .023$, $\beta = .145$, $p = .001$). This indicates a more pronounced correlation compared to authoritarian parenting, where each incremental rise in liberal parenting is associated with a 0.123 unit increase in altruistic behaviour. The overall model was statistically significant, with an R^2 value of $.21$ and an adjusted R^2 value of $.78$. This means that about 21% of the variation in altruism can be explained by the independent variables included in the model. The F statistic ($F = 7.43$) provides more evidence of the model's importance.

The regression analysis findings indicate that both authoritarian and permissive parenting styles exert a substantial and favourable influence on the level of generosity exhibited by the individuals. The positive beta coefficients suggest that when parenting styles become more authoritarian or permissive, altruistic behaviours tend to rise. The strong impact of authoritarian parenting may be indicative of cultural norms in which reverence for authority and societal responsibilities might manifest as selfless actions. Additionally, it could imply that the organisation and strictness linked to authoritarian parenting may cultivate a sense of obligation to partake in selfless deeds.

Conversely, the greater ability of permissive parenting to predict altruistic behaviour is fascinating. This implies that the flexibility and support offered in permissive families may create a setting where children feel more empowered and inspired to take action on behalf of others. The significant amount of variance accounted for by various parenting styles underscores their significance in the formation of altruistic behaviours. Nevertheless, it is crucial to acknowledge that although the model elucidates a substantial proportion of the variability, there is still a considerable amount that remains unexplained by these factors. This suggests that there may be more elements, not accounted for in the model, that also have a substantial impact on the development of altruism.

These findings emphasise the intricate nature of the formation of prosocial behaviours such as altruism and emphasise the possibility of various parenting approaches to foster these qualities in distinct manners. Additionally, they emphasise the need for additional research to comprehend the mechanisms by which various components of parenting impact altruistic behaviour, as well as to investigate other variables that may contribute to this significant social characteristic.

| Variable | Altruism | | | |
|-------------------------------|----------|-------|---------------|------|
| | B | SE. B | Beta, β | p |
| Authoritarian | .061 | .022 | .115 | .000 |
| Permissive | .123 | .023 | .145 | .001 |
| R² | .21 | | | |
| Adjusted R² | .78 | | | |
| F | 7.43 | | | |

The Role of Morality and Parenting Styles in Enhancing Youth Prosocial Behavior

Recent research constantly emphasises the significant influence of parenting styles on different aspects of youth behaviour, including prosocial behaviour. Prosocial behaviour, which refers to the genuine care and consideration for the welfare of others, is widely recognised as crucial for maintaining social cohesion and the overall welfare of a community (Eisenberg & Mussen, 1989). This debate analyses the distinct impacts of authoritarian and permissive parenting styles on the formation of prosocial behaviours in young people, as demonstrated by the results of the regression analysis.

The apparent contradiction between authoritarian parenting and prosocial behaviour may seem perplexing at first, given that authoritarian parenting is typically associated with stringent regulations and elevated expectations. Nevertheless, in specific cultural settings, like Asian societies, authoritarian parenting might be regarded as a manifestation of concern and engagement, hence potentially fostering prosocial behaviours (Chao & Tseng, 2002). This perspective has the potential to cause young people to internalise the significance of assisting others as a component of their social obligation. In contrast, the permissive parenting style, characterised by low demands and high responsiveness, was discovered to have an even more pronounced positive correlation with prosocial behaviour. The aforementioned discovery implies that the independence and assistance offered in liberal parenting models can promote the growth of empathetic concern and prosocial behaviours (Knafo & Plomin, 2006). Permissive parenting can create an atmosphere in which young people feel more empowered to participate in prosocial behaviours, driven by their own personal belief rather than a sense of responsibility.

Although the study emphasises the benefits of both authoritarian and permissive parenting in promoting prosocial behaviour, it is crucial to adopt a well-rounded approach that combines the qualities of various parenting styles. The authoritative parenting style, characterised by a combination of high demands and responsiveness, has been found to have a favourable impact on many outcomes in young people. However, in this particular study (Baumrind, 1991), it was not identified as a significant predictor. The significance of cultural environment is crucial in assessing the impact of parenting on prosocial behaviour. In Malaysia, a multicultural country that places great importance on community and family bonds, the manifestations of authoritarian and permissive parenting may diverge from

Western understandings, resulting in distinct developmental consequences (Dwairy et al., 2006). Exploring cultural nuances is crucial for comprehending the intricate aspects of parenting and its impact on promoting prosocial behaviours.

Implications and Future Research Directions

The correlation between parenting approaches and the cultivation of prosocial behaviour in young individuals is not universally applicable; it varies in accordance with the unique characteristics of each individual it seeks to influence. The efficacy of a parenting style can significantly differ depending on individual personality traits, socio-cultural backgrounds, and environmental settings. Authoritarian parenting, when implemented within a nurturing family environment that emphasises community well-being and social duty, may be linked to favourable results in prosocial behaviour (Rothbaum & Weisz, 1994). An atmosphere of this nature could cultivate a sense of obligation and societal awareness, which are crucial elements of prosocial conduct. Furthermore, the loving and communicative nature of permissive parenting may foster the development of prosocial behaviour tendencies in children, as they are encouraged to consider the views and needs of others (Krevans & Gibbs, 1996).

Cultural differences are crucial in influencing the understanding and consequences of different parenting techniques. In communities that prioritise collectivism, the overall welfare of the society is typically given more importance than individual preferences. This can result in a distinct form of prosocial behaviour that differs from what is observed in individualistic cultures. When designing educational programmes to encourage altruism, it is important to consider cultural variations and include values that are meaningful to the specific group being targeted (Chen, 2000). This cultural congruence guarantees that interventions are not only embraced but also successful in promoting the targeted prosocial results.

Considering the consequences of the study, it is crucial to urgently develop adaptive and personalised techniques in both parenting and educational tactics. Customising interventions to correspond with the child's personality, stage of development, and cultural beliefs could optimise the effectiveness of efforts to promote altruism (Grusec, 1997). Parenting seminars and school curriculums should include modules that highlight the significance of comprehending and valuing cultural variety in fostering prosocial behaviours. These efforts could play a crucial role in shaping a generation that is more compassionate and motivated to act selflessly.

Conclusion

Ultimately, this study's results emphasise the substantial impact of parenting approaches on the formation of altruistic behaviours in young individuals. Research has demonstrated that both authoritarian and permissive parenting methods can have a beneficial effect on altruistic behaviour. This suggests that many approaches to parenting can promote prosocial tendencies, as long as they are practiced in suitable cultural and individual circumstances. These findings emphasise the intricate nature of the connection between parenting and the moral growth of young individuals and support the need for a sophisticated comprehension of how different parenting approaches might be optimised to foster altruism. In order to advance, it is imperative for future research to further investigate these dynamics, utilising culturally sensitive and longitudinally planned studies to gain a deeper understanding of the enduring impacts of parenting on altruistic behaviour. This knowledge will be extremely important in providing guidance to parents, educators, and policymakers in creating specific

interventions that effectively promote the development of positive social behaviour in the next generation, equipping them with the necessary skills to make a constructive contribution to society.

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