IJAAR PUBLISHING®

International Journal of Research in Education and Sustainable Development | ISSN: 2782-7666
Vol. 6, Issue 1 (2026) | www.ijaar.org/ijresd

PARENTING STYLES AS CORRELATES OF MORAL ORIENTATION AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN RIVERS STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study examined parenting styles as correlates of moral orientation among senior students of public secondary school in Rivers State. Correlational design was employed for the study. Ten research questions and ten hypotheses guided the study. Population of the study was 63,731 (SS) students in 310 public Secondary Schools in Rivers State. The sample size was 438 (SS), using Taro Yamane method to determine the sample size for the study. Multi-Stage sampling was used to draw the sample for the study. Two instruments were used for data collection they are" Parenting Styles Scale (PSS) and Moral Orientation Scale" (MOS). The instrument was validated by two other experts. The reliability of the instrument was established using the Cronbach Alpha reliability method for measure of internal consistency which yielded a reliability coefficients of 0.83 were obtained for the two instruments. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation was used to answer the research questions and test of null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study showed weak negative significant relationship between authoritarian, permissive, uninvolved parenting styles and moral orientation among public secondary school students in Rivers State, while there is strong positive significant relationship between authoritative and moral orientation among senior students of public secondary school in Rivers State. Based on these findings, it was recommended that government should implement comprehensive education programmes so as to raise awareness about the detrimental effects of child abuse on student's moral development.

Keywords: Authoritarian, authoritative, permissive, uninvolved parenting styles and moral orientation

Echebe, P. I. & Enekeme, A. B. (2026). Parenting Styles as Correlates of Moral Orientation Among Secondary School Students in Rivers State. *International Journal of Research in Education and Sustainable Development. 6*(1), 46-59.

INTRODUCTION

Education is the process of bringing desirable changes in the behaviour of human beings. It can also be defined as the process of imparting and acquiring knowledge and habits through instructions or studies. Education is as old as the human race. It is a never ending process of inner growth and development. Its period stretches from cradle to the grave. Education helps human beings to increase and develop their thinking and reasoning, problem solving and creativity, intelligence and aptitude, sentiments and skills, good values and attitude. Hunan being learns one thing or the other every day and every moment, hence, education is an activity or a process, which transforms the behaviour of a person from instinctive behaviour to human behaviour. Education also builds and shapes moral behaviour of a child, hence moral orientation becomes important in the family and society at large as the child grows into adulthood.

However, moral orientation is referred as an individual's perspective that guides their moral reasoning, decision-making and behaviour. Haidt (2021) described moral orientation as the development of moral beliefs and values rooted in a sense of responsibility and integrity, influenced by social interactions and ethical role-modeling. It encompasses the deeply held beliefs, values and principles that shape how a person evaluates what is right or wrong, good or bad, in various situations. Narvaez (2017) conceptualized moral orientation as consisting of moral sensitivity (recognizing moral issues), moral judgment (reasoning about right and wrong), moral motivation (commitment to moral principles), and moral character (consistent ethical behaviour). Moral orientation is influenced by an individual's core values and beliefs about morality. It is an integration of cognitive, emotional and behavioral dimensions of morality, emphasizing the role of identity and self-concept in shaping ethical choices. Individuals with a particular moral orientation may prioritize certain guiding principles or moral virtues, such as honesty, fairness, compassion, justice, or respect for autonomy, which inform their moral reasoning and behaviour. Moral orientation can be context-dependent, meaning that individuals may apply their moral principles differently depending on the specific circumstances, cultural norms, or social expectations. It can evolve over time and may be influenced by life experiences, education, exposure to diverse perspectives and critical reflection. It can also exhibit flexibility in response to new information or changing social contexts (Kluckhohn & Strodlbeck, 2015).

Again, the moral values and behaviours exhibited by parents, peers and teachers significantly impact a student's moral orientation. Children often adopt values and ethical perspectives modeled by their parents. Children often internalize the moral values and behaviours demonstrated by their parents. A supportive and morally principled family environment can positively influence a child's moral orientation. The quality of relationships with parents, including communication styles and levels of trust, can impact a child's moral development and ability to navigate moral dilemmas. Peer groups can reinforce certain moral values and behaviours, leading to conformity or divergence in moral orientation. Social pressures from peers can affect moral decision-making, especially in contexts where conformity to group norms conflicts with personal values. A positive school climate characterized by fairness, respect and inclusivity can contribute to the development of prosocial behaviours and ethical conduct (Damon, 2018).Societal and cultural norms play a significant role in shaping moral values and orientations of students. Cultural beliefs about ethics, justice, and interpersonal relationships influence adolescents' moral perspectives. Exposure to media content, including television, movies, and social media, can introduce students to diverse moral viewpoints and influence their moral reasoning. As cognitive abilities develop during adolescence, students become capable of more complex moral reasoning, including consideration of multiple perspectives and ethical principles. Therefore, parents and teachers have responsibility of

building moral value of students for a better society. On the other hand, challenging family environments, such as neglect or abuse, can lead to emotional and behavioral issues (Masten & Cicchetti, 2020). Again, several factors may affect moral orientation of individuals from childhood through adulthood; hence this work anchors on parenting styles of authoritative, authoritarian, permissive and uninvolved.

Parenting style is another important factor that influences moral orientation and academic achievement of students in secondary schools. The role of parents over their children`s life cannot be over emphasized. Parents are presumed to have vision for the children they bring into this world. For this purpose, they develop some strategies they use to see the children move through stages of life towards realizing the vision, conforming to acceptable social norms and moral orientation. Parenting styles is a psychological construct representing standard strategies that parents employ in their childrearing practices to realize their tacit goals for their children (Dike & Galadinma, 2017). Parenting is a complex activity that includes many specific behaviours that work individually and together to influence child-rearing outcomes. Odongo et al. (2016) noted that parenting styles are aspects of raising, promoting, supporting the physical, emotional, social and intellectual development of a child from the time the child is born until adulthood. Parenting style has to do with the practice of bringing up children. It is the style which parents adopt in raising their children from the time of birth to adulthood. The moral development of a child is an important task that is linked with parenting styles.

Li (2021) listed four parenting style as follows; authoritative, authoritarian, permissive and uninvolved parenting styles. She recorded that authoritative parenting style is characterized by high expectations of compliance to parental rules and directions, an open dialogue on those rules for behaviours and child centered approach. They are not usually controlling but allow the child to explore freely. Authoritative parents set limits, but demand maturity when punishing a child by explaining their reasons for such punishment, when a child falls short. Children who are subject to this kind of parenting style may debate or discuss with parents on issues affecting them. Li (2021) also reported that authoritarian parenting style is characterized by high expectation of conformity and adherence to parental rules and directions. These parents expect much from their children but do not explain the reasons for the rules, unlike the authoritative parents. Children who have authoritative parents are less likely to engage in risky behaviors or exhibit conduct problems. The consistent discipline and clear boundaries set by authoritative parents contribute to this positive outcome. Authoritative parenting style creates an environment that nurtures the personal and social growth of children. It fosters good moral value, a sense of responsibility, and emotional well-being, which contribute to their overall development and success in various aspects of life.

Authoritarian parents are most likely to hit a child as a form of punishment instead of correcting the child by using other corrective measures. Children nurtured with this type of parenting style lack social competence. Authoritarian parents will likely predict what the child should do, instead of allowing the child to take initiatives. These children rarely think on their own, they are socially withdrawn and look up to others to decide on what is right. They lack spontaneity and curiosity. On the opposite side of the spectrum, some children might also rebel by openly defying the parents and leaving home at a tender age as well as dating or marrying a partner whom they know their parents would disapprove and maybe estranged from their parents during adulthood. The fear of punishment and disapproval from authoritarian parents can lead to increased anxiety and stress among secondary school students. This fear-driven environment may hinder their moral value and affect their overall mental well-being. Some students might respond to authoritarian parenting by becoming

rebellious, seeking to break free from the restrictive environment. On the other hand, others may become overly compliant and passive, lacking the ability to make decisions on their own. The lack of open communication and emotional support in authoritarian households may hinder the development of strong interpersonal skills. Students might find it challenging to build healthy relationships and empathy towards others

Furthermore, Coplan et al. (2017) reported that permissive parenting style sometimes called Indulgent is characterized as having few behavioral expectations from the child. Permissive parents try to be friendly with their children, but do not play a parental role. The expectations of the child are very low and there is no discipline. Such parents also allow children to make their own decisions. This type of parenting is very lax, with few punishments or rules. The parents also tend to give their children whatever they want and hope that they are appreciated for their accommodating style. Darlington et al. (2018) contributed that children of permissive parents are immature, lack impulse control and are irresponsible. They may tend to be more impulsive and as adolescents and may engage more in misconduct such as drug abuse and other anti-social behaviours. Such children never learn to control their own behaviour. Since permissive parenting often allows for a more relaxed approach to daily routines, students may not develop strong time management skills. This can lead to procrastination and difficulties meeting deadlines for school assignments.

Alegre (2020) noted that children of uninvolved parenting style are given a lot of freedom as this type of parents normally stays out of the way of a child. They fulfill the child's basic needs while generally remaining detached from their child's life. An uninvolved parent does not utilize a particular disciplining style and has a limited amount of communication with their child. They tend to offer a low amount of nurturing while having either few or no expectations of their children. Akhter (2018) also recorded that children of uninvolved parents are usually flexible and may even be more self-sufficient than children with other types of parenting styles. However, these skills are developed out of necessity. Additionally, they might have trouble controlling their emotions, less effective coping strategies, may have academic challenges, and difficulty with maintaining social relationships. Uninvolved parenting can lead to a lack of motivation and interest in academics. Children may not receive the necessary support and encouragement to excel in their studies, leading to lower academic achievement. Without parental guidance and involvement, children may have difficulty setting and achieving academic goals. They may not be aware of the importance of education and the potential benefits of academic success.

Deeksha (2019) supported that often-time, children raised with this style grow up feeling lonely and having a feeling of resentment against their parents for being uninvolved and are often estranged from their parents. The level of this estrangement may even be determined by the gender of the child. Nurturing children with a bad parenting style can be counterproductive. Bad parenting style can give rise to anti-social children who have wrong value system and show no remorse in indulging in corrupt practices including drug abuse and other social vices. The lack of parental monitoring and involvement may result in increased absenteeism and truancy from school, further affecting academic performance. Therefore, parents have a vital role to play in the moral orientation of their children.

The moral value of students has become a major concern of researchers globally and locally as it relates to the overall wellbeing and achievement of students.Stakeholders in education feel worried and disappointed when students fail to do well academically. Children upbringing is very crucial in the family and society at large, hence some children develop to become responsible citizens of the society, while others grow to be irresponsible members of the society.

Lack of parental involvement, supervision and monitoring contributes to underachievement, criminal tendencies, rape, assault, fighting, robbery, cult related activities and other social vices among secondary school students. These negative personalities exhibited are also associated with child abuse as students are subjected to different forms of abuses either intentionally or unintentionally at home, school environment and society at large. Some are molested, neglected, ill-treated, yet others are abandoned, harmed, and inflicted with pains and turmoil.

These have resulted in withdrawal or difficulty concentrating in the classroom, anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and difficulties in forming healthy relationships with others and dropping out of school. The constant stress and fear experienced by abused children can also disrupt the normal development of the brain, affecting cognitive functions like memory, attention, and executive functions, which directly affect their overall health and physical development. These can have detrimental impact on moral orientation of students. Moreso, exposing students to child abuse has severe consequences, which could lead to unwanted pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases such as gonorrhea and acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) with its resultant effect on students or school dropout among the victims. Child abuse and poor parenting style have negative influence on secondary school students.

A number of strategies have also been adopted both by governmental and non-governmental organizations to proffer solutions to this nagging problem in secondary schools, but have not achieved expected results yet. This may partly be due to the fact that stakeholders in education have not taken time to address problems related to child abuse, parenting styles and moral orientation of secondary school students in Rivers State. This study is one of the steps that will be taken towards filling the existing research gap, by identifying some of the student-related factors that might have influenced secondary school students' overall development. Therefore, the problem of the study is to examine parenting styles as correlates of moral orientation among senior students of public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study was to investigate parenting styles as correlates of moral orientation among senior students of public secondary schools in Rivers State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Examine the relationship between authoritarian parenting style and moral orientation among senior students of public secondary school in Rivers State.
2. Ascertain the relationship between authoritative parenting style and moral orientation among senior students of public secondary school in Rivers State.
3. Find out the relationship between permissive parenting style and moral orientation among senior students of public secondary school in Rivers State.
4. Ascertain the relationship between uninvolved parenting style and moral orientation among senior students of public secondary school in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the relationship between authoritarian parenting style and moral orientation among senior students of public secondary school in Rivers State?
2. What is the relationship between authoritative parenting style and moral orientation among senior students of public secondary school in Rivers State?

3. What is the relationship between permissive parenting style and moral orientation among senior students of public secondary school in Rivers State?
4. What is the relationship uninvolved parenting style and moral orientation among senior students of public secondary school in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant is the relationship between authoritarian parenting style and moral orientation among senior students of public secondary school in Rivers State.
2. There is no significant relationship between authoritative parenting style and moral orientation among senior students of public secondary school in Rivers State.
3. There is no significant relationship between permissive parenting style and moral orientation among senior students of public secondary school in Rivers State.
4. There is no significant relationship between uninvolved parenting style and moral orientation among senior students of public secondary school in Rivers State.

METHODOLOGY

Correlational research design was employed for the study. The population of the study consisted SS students from 310 senior secondary schools of public schools in Rivers State. The sample size for this study was 438 (SS) students, established using Taro Yamane formula to determine the sample size which yielded the value of 398. The instrument for data collection was a self-structured questionnaire titled "Child Abuse, Parenting Styles and Moral Orientation Questionnaire" (CAPSMOQ). The reliability of the instrument; (CAPSMOQ) was established using the Cronbach Alpha reliability method for measure of internal consistency of the items. The Cronbach Alpha yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.83 forCAPSMOQ, while the sub scales yielded 0.82 for CAQ, 0.85 for PSQ and 0.83 for PDQ, thereby making the instrument reliable for data collection.

The instrument was administered directly to the students in their respective schools by the researcher and help of three research assistants, after permission has been sought and obtained from the school heads. The data generated for the study was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). The Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to answer the research questions and test of null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Presentation of Results

Research Question One: What is the relationship between authoritarian parenting style and moral orientation among senior students of public secondary school in Rivers State?

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between authoritarian parenting style and moral orientation among senior students of public secondary school in Rivers State

Table 1: Pearson's Product Moment Correlation of Authoritarian Parenting Style and Moral Orientation among Senior Students ofPublic Secondary School in Rivers State

		Authoritarian Parenting	Moral Orientation
Authoritarian Parenting	Pearson Correlation	1	-.426**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	390	390
Moral Orientation	Pearson Correlation	-.426**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	390	390

* Significant at 0.05 (2-tailed) *

Table 1 presents Pearson's Product Moment Correlation result of authoritarian parenting style and moral orientation among senior students of public secondary school in Rivers State. The result revealed r-value of -.426 with its corresponding p-value of .000<0.05 level of significance. This showed moderate negative relationship between authoritarian parenting style and moral orientation among senior students of public secondary school in Rivers State. Again, since the p-value is less than the chosen level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected. It therefore indicated that there was significant negative relationship between authoritarian parenting style and moral orientation among senior students of public secondary school in Rivers State. This also means that as authoritarian parenting style increases, there tend to be a corresponding decrease in the moral orientation of secondary school students.

Research Question Eight: What is the relationship between authoritative parenting style and moral orientation among senior students of public secondary school in Rivers State?

Hypothesis Eight: There is no significant relationship between authoritative parenting style and moral orientation among senior students of public secondary school in Rivers State

Table 1: Pearson's Product Moment Correlation of Authoritative Parenting Style and Moral Orientation among Senior Students ofPublic Secondary School in Rivers State

		Authoritative Parenting	Moral Orientation
Authoritative Parenting	Pearson Correlation	1	.823**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	390	390
Moral Orientation	Pearson Correlation	.823**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	390	390

* Significant at 0.05 (2-tailed) *

Table 2 presents Pearson's Product Moment Correlation result of authoritative parenting style and moral orientation among senior students of public secondary school in Rivers State. The result revealed r-value of .823 with its corresponding p-value of .000<0.05 level of significance. This showed a strong positive relationship between authoritative parenting style and moral orientation among senior students of public secondary school in Rivers State. Again, since the p-value is less than the chosen level of significance, the null hypothesis is

rejected. It therefore indicated that there was significant positive relationship between authoritative parenting style and moral orientation among senior students of public secondary school in Rivers State. This also means that as authoritative parenting style increases, there tend to be a corresponding increase in the moral orientation of secondary school students.

Research Question Three: What is the relationship between permissive parenting style and moral orientation among senior students of public secondary school in Rivers State?

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant relationship between permissive parenting style and moral orientation among senior students of public secondary school in Rivers State

Table 3: Pearson's Product Moment Correlation of Permissive Parenting Style and Moral Orientation among Public Secondary School Studentsin Rivers State

		Permissive Parenting	Moral Orientation
Permissive Parenting	Pearson Correlation	1	-.304**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.010
	N	390	390
Moral Orientation	Pearson Correlation	-.304**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.010	
	N	390	390

* Significant at 0.05 (2-tailed) *

Table 3 presents Pearson's Product Moment Correlation result of permissive parenting style and moral orientation among senior students of public secondary school in Rivers State. The result revealed r-value of -.304 with its corresponding p-value of .010<0.05 level of significance. This showed a weak negative relationship between permissive parenting style and moral orientation among senior students of public secondary school in Rivers State. Again, since the p-value is less than the chosen level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected. It therefore implied that there was significant relationship between permissive parenting style and moral orientation among senior students of public secondary school in Rivers State. This also means that as permissive parenting style increase, there tend to be a corresponding decrease in the moral orientation of secondary school students.

Research Question Four: What is relationship between uninvolved parenting style and moral orientation among senior students of public secondary school in Rivers State?

Hypothesis Four: There is no significant relationship between uninvolved parenting style and moral orientation among senior students of public secondary school

Table 4: Pearson's Product Moment Correlation of Uninvolved Parenting Style and Moral Orientation among Senior Students ofPublic Secondary School in Rivers State

		Uninvolved Parenting	Moral Orientation
Uninvolved Parenting	Pearson Correlation	1	-.309**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.010
	N	390	390
Moral Orientation	Pearson Correlation	-.309**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.010	
	N	390	390

* Significant at 0.05 (2-tailed) *

Table 4 presents Pearson's Product Moment Correlation result of uninvolved parenting style and moral orientation among senior students of public secondary school in Rivers State. The result revealed r-value of -.309 with its corresponding p-value of .010<0.05 level of significance. This showed a weak negative relationship between uninvolved parenting style and moral orientation among senior students of public secondary school in Rivers State. Again, since the p-value is less than the chosen level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected. It therefore implied that there was significant relationship between uninvolved parenting style and moral orientation among senior students of public secondary school in Rivers State. This also means that as uninvolved parenting style increases, there tend to be a corresponding decrease in the moral orientation of secondary school students.

Discussion of Findings

Table 1 showed a moderate negative relationship between authoritarian parenting style and moral orientation among senior students ofpublic secondary school in Rivers State. Research question seven indicated that authoritarian parenting style relate to moral orientation among senior students ofpublic secondary school in Rivers State, while the corresponding hypothesis indicated that there is significant relationship between authoritarian parenting style and moral orientation among senior students ofpublic secondary school in Rivers State. This also means that as authoritarian parenting style increases, there tend to be a corresponding decrease in the moral orientation of secondary school students.

This result is in line with the finding of Odongo et al. (2019) who revealed that authoritarian parenting style has significant negative influence on moral development of adolescents. This could be probably because children raised in authoritarian households may rebel against authority figures or develop resentment towards rules and regulations. This can lead to a lack of internalization of moral values, as they may only follow rules when being watched. Odiase and Ekechukwu (2019) found significant relationship between parenting style and moral value secondary school students. This could be because authoritarian parenting typically does not encourage autonomy or independent decision-making. As a result, children may struggle to develop their own moral compass and rely heavily on external guidance for moral decision-making.

This finding is in disagreement with the study of Jimerson (2019) who found significant positive influence of authoritarian parenting style on moral behaviour of students. The study also revealed that parental strictness is concern with caring and involvement which help to create self-motivation and modification of character. This result could be probably because

authoritarian parenting sets clear boundaries and expectations for behavior. Authoritarian parents provide structure and stability for children, helping them understand what is morally acceptable and what is not. It often emphasizes discipline and responsibility. When done in a balanced way, this can help children develop a sense of accountability for their actions and understand the consequences of immoral behaviour.

Table 2 showed a strong positive relationship between authoritative parenting style and moral orientation among senior students ofpublic secondary school in Rivers State. Research question eight indicated authoritative parenting style relates to moral orientation among senior students ofpublic secondary school in Rivers State, while the corresponding hypothesis indicated that there is significant positive relationship between authoritative parenting style and moral orientation among senior students ofpublic secondary school in Rivers State. This also implies that as authoritative parenting style increases, there tend to be a corresponding increase in the moral orientation of secondary school students.

The finding of the present study is in line with the study of Martinez and Gracia (2018) who found significant positive relationship between authoritative parenting style and moral orientation of secondary school students. This finding could be probably because authoritative parents set high expectations for behaviour but also provide support and guidance in achieving those expectations. This promotes self-regulation and self-discipline in children, allowing them to resist peer pressure and adhere to moral principles even in challenging situations.

Langer et al. (2020) found significant positive relationship between authoritative parenting style and moral orientation of secondary school students. Similarly, authoritative parents show respect for their children, involve them in family affairs and decision making, engaging them in age appropriate independence while retaining ultimate responsibility. The possible deduction from this point of view is that authoritative parenting style promotes social, intellectual and academic competence in adolescent in order to shape their moral value in the society as they grow into adult.

Li (2021) supported that parents who use this method raise children that are successful, articulate and happy with themselves and generous to others. They are less likely to report depression and low self-esteem, and less likely to engage in anti-social behaviours. This encourages children to understand the moral rationale behind certain behaviors, fostering internalization of moral values.

Table 3 showed a weak negative relationship between permissive parenting style and moral orientation among senior students ofpublic secondary school in Rivers State. Research questions nine indicated that permissive parenting style relates to moral orientation among senior students of public secondary school in Rivers State, while the corresponding hypothesis indicated that there is negative significant relationship between permissive parenting style and moral orientation among senior students ofpublic secondary school in Rivers State. This also means that when there is increase in the scores of permissive parenting style, there tend to be a corresponding decrease in the moral orientation of secondary school students.

This result is consistent with the study of Eze (2019) who found negative relationship between permissive parenting style and moral orientation of secondary school. This could be probably because permissive parenting is characterized with low demand for maturity, control and communication. Obiunu (2018) supported that that there is weak negative

relationship between permissive parenting style and moral value of students in secondary school. This could be probably because permissive parents give their children enough freedom. Freedom to this degree can lead to other negative habits as the parent does not provide much guidance on moderation. Hence, these children are used to doing what they want; they may become rebellious when confronted with demanding teachers or other authority figure, thereby affecting their moral orientation.

AL-Alawi (2018) also corroborated that weak relationship exit between permissive parenting style and attitude formation of secondary school students. They added that permissive parenting style is also associated with low self-esteem and low motivational orientation among adolescents; hence children of permissive parents often become spoiled, bossy, and self-absorbed. They are more likely to struggle academically and exhibit more behavioural problems as they do not appreciate authority and rules.

Table 4 showed a weak negative relationship between uninvolved parenting style and moral orientation among senior students ofpublic secondary school in Rivers State. Research question ten indicated that uninvolved parenting style relates to moral orientation among senior students ofpublic secondary school in Rivers State, while the corresponding hypothesis indicated that there is significant relationship between uninvolved parenting style and moral orientation among senior students of public secondary school in Rivers State. This also means that as uninvolved parenting style increases, there tend to be a corresponding decrease in the moral orientation of secondary school students.

This present study is in harmony with the study of Okala (2019) who found negative relationship between uninvolved parenting style and moral development of a child. Similarly, uninvolved parents typically provide little guidance or support for their children, without clear moral guidance from parents. Adolescents may struggle to develop a strong sense of right and wrong. Chidiebube (2018) found negative relationship between uninvolved parenting style and moral development of a child. This could be probably because uninvolved parents may be emotionally distant or indifferent to their children's needs. This emotional neglect can leave adolescents feeling disconnected and unsupported, hindering their ability to develop empathy and compassion towards others. Adolescents raised by uninvolved parents may be more likely to engage in risky behaviors such as substance abuse, delinquency, or reckless behavior. Without parental guidance and supervision, they may lack the moral compass to make responsible decisions

Nwankwo (2013) supported the study when he recorded that uninvolved parents are those parents who do not care for what their children are doing, and where they are at any point in time. They owe little or no obligation to their children in terms of training and provision of basic requirements for survival and growth. Some children from this type of orientation roam the streets, sleep in the gutters and commit assorted types of crime. Therefore, negative relationship exists between uninvolved parenting style and moral value orientation of students.

Conclusion

The relationship between child abuse, parenting styles and the moral orientation of senior students of public secondary school in Rivers State underscores the profound impact that family dynamics have on the ethical development of young individuals. The findings suggest that exposure to abusive behaviours during childhood significantly influences not only the emotional well-being but also the moral compass of adolescents. Moreover, the correlation between

parenting styles and moral orientation highlights the pivotal role caregivers play in shaping the values and principles adopted by their children.

Addressing child abuse requires multifaceted approaches that encompass not only legal and social interventions but also initiatives aimed at promoting positive parenting practices. By fostering nurturing and supportive environments within families, communities and educational institutions, we can cultivate a culture of empathy, respect and integrity among adolescents. Furthermore, providing resources and support systems for both parents and children can help break the cycle of abuse and foster healthier relationships.

It was also found that physical abuse, psychological abuse, sexual abuse, economic abuse religious abuse, verbal abuse, authoritarian, authoritative, permissive, and uninvolved parenting styles significantly relate to moral orientation among public secondary school students in Rivers State

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the research:

1. Parents should be encouraged to adopt authoritative parenting style that is characterized by warmth, support and clear expectations. This approach provides a balance between nurturing and structure, which has been associated with better academic performance, motivation, and psychological well-being of adolescents.
2. Government should offer support services and counseling for permissive parents to help them establish appropriate boundaries and structure within their households while still nurturing their children's independence.
3. Government should establish mentorship programmes and support networks for children of uninvolved parents to provide them with positive role models and opportunities for guidance and support.
4. Parents should be aware that their parenting styles have positive or negative effect on child’s moral development

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