

## Exploring Uncharted Pathways: Unraveling the Link between Distinct Parenting Styles and Suicidal Vulnerability

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### ABSTRACT

Suicide is a global public health concern influenced by various factors, including parenting styles. This review paper synthesizes existing literature on parenting styles and suicide risk, exploring the conceptual framework, empirical findings, and mediating mechanisms, offering implications for prevention and intervention. Parenting styles (authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, neglectful) have distinct mental health outcomes. Authoritative parenting is linked to positive outcomes, while others show adverse effects. Empirical studies indicate authoritative parenting associates with lower suicide risk, while authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful parenting link to higher risk. Qualitative studies highlight themes of harsh parenting and emotional neglect among individuals with suicidal tendencies. Mechanisms underlying the relationship include attachment theory, social learning theory, and stress-coping models. Secure attachment fosters emotional security, reducing suicide risk. Social learning theory suggests children learn coping skills through parental modeling, influencing their vulnerability to suicidal tendencies. Collaborative efforts are essential to foster supportive family environments and mitigate suicide risk. The review concludes with key findings, limitations, and recommendations for future research. Longitudinal studies and cross-cultural investigations are needed. In conclusion, this review enhances knowledge on parenting styles and suicide risk, emphasizing the importance of parenting in mental health outcomes and offering avenues for targeted prevention and intervention.

**Keywords:** *Parenting Styles, Suicide Risk, Authoritative Parenting, Mental Health, Prevention, Intervention*

Suicide is a significant public health concern globally, affecting individuals of all ages and backgrounds. It is a complex phenomenon influenced by various factors, including social, psychological, and environmental elements. Among these factors, parenting styles have emerged as potential contributors to an individual's suicide risk. Parenting styles, representing the emotional and behavioural dimensions of parent-child interactions, can significantly impact a child's mental well-being, self-esteem, and coping abilities. Understanding the role of parenting styles in shaping mental health outcomes, particularly suicide risk, is crucial for developing effective prevention and intervention strategies.

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### Research Objectives

The main goals of this review article are to investigate the body of literature concerning the connection, between parenting styles and the risk of suicide summarize the findings and uncover the possible factors that contribute to this association. Through an examination of evidence theoretical frameworks and mediating elements this review seeks to provide insights into the relationship, between parenting styles and the likelihood of suicide.

### Methodology

For conducting this review paper, research was started through databases such as PubMed, PsycINFO and Google Scholar. Keywords like "parenting styles " "suicide," "suicide risk factors " "adolescents," and "parent child relationship" were used to find literature. The main focus was on peer reviewed journal articles and book chapters that provided insights into the connection between parenting styles and suicide risk. Furthermore, frameworks that discussed the mechanisms underlying this relationship were taken into consideration. The selected articles were carefully evaluated based on their quality, relevance and contributions, to our review's objectives.

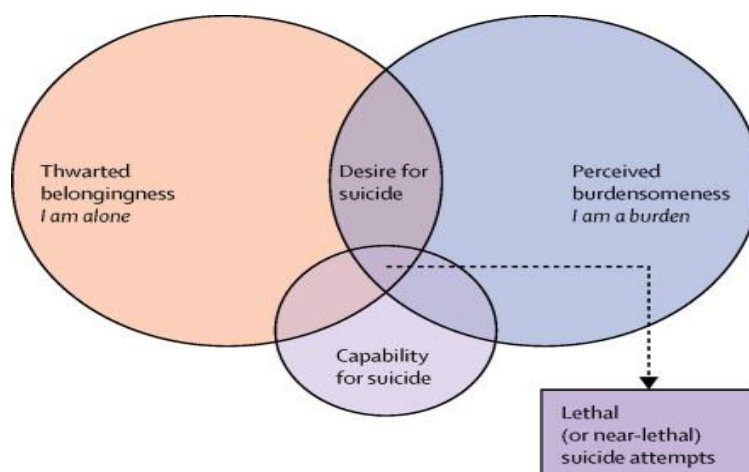
### Parenting Styles and Suicide: Conceptual Framework:

#### Parenting Styles:

Parenting styles refer to the patterns of behavior and emotional responsiveness exhibited by parents in their interactions with their children. Baumrind's classic typology proposed four parenting styles: authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful. The authoritative style is characterized by high levels of warmth, responsiveness, and support, along with reasonable rules and expectations. The authoritarian style involves strict adherence to rules and high demands, but with limited emotional support. Permissive parenting involves low control and high warmth, allowing children considerable freedom. Lastly, the neglectful style is characterized by low control and low warmth, resulting in disengagement from the child's life.

#### Suicide:

Suicide is a tragic outcome of various underlying psychological, social, and environmental factors. It is the act of intentionally taking one's own life, leading to devastating consequences for individuals, families, and communities. Suicidal behavior includes suicidal ideation (thoughts of suicide), suicide attempts, and completed suicide. Globally, suicide is a significant public health issue, with varying rates across different age groups, genders, and cultures.



### **Theoretical Connections between Parenting Styles and Suicide:**

Numerous theoretical frameworks shed light on how parental behaviors and relationships can affect a child's sensitivity to suicidal tendencies by offering insights into the linkages between parenting styles and the risk of suicide.

According to attachment theory, a close emotional connection between parents and children develops a sense of stability and support, fostering resilience and overall well-being. Children who feel a strong connection to their parents are more likely to feel heard, loved, and respected, which can work as a deterrent to suicide thoughts. For instance, a child who has a secure connection receives their parents' open communication and emotional validation. They feel at ease asking their caregivers for assistance and support in times of need, which lowers the probability that they may turn to harmful behaviors.

**Social Learning Theory:** In accordance with social learning theory, kids pick up problem-solving and emotion-management techniques by watching and copying their parents. Children are more likely to develop appropriate coping skills if parents can properly control their stress and emotions. For instance, a child is more likely to use comparable strategies when confronted with difficult circumstances if their parents demonstrate effective stress management approaches, such as seeking social support or engaging in relaxation techniques. This can lessen their propensity to engage in self-destructive actions during stressful situations. On the other hand, if a child grows up around maladaptive coping strategies used by their parents, such as substance misuse or hostility, they may internalize these behaviors. This acquired tendency might make them more likely to take harmful actions against themselves.

**Stress Coping Models:** Stress coping models highlight how parental behaviors can influence a child's coping skills, which may in turn influence the likelihood that they would exhibit suicidal tendencies. For instance, caring, supportive, and authoritative parenting that sets clear boundaries can help kids develop good coping mechanisms. These kids might learn how to solve problems, control their emotions, and be resilient, which would lower their likelihood of having suicide thoughts.

In contrast, children who experience abusive or neglectful parenting may lack effective coping mechanisms. For instance, a youngster reared in a chronically stressful environment without the proper support or direction may find it difficult to deal with life's obstacles, making them more susceptible to suicidal thoughts and actions.

### ***Parenting Styles and Suicide Risk Factors***

#### **Authoritarian Parenting Style:**

The authoritarian parenting style is characterized by strict rules, high demands, and low warmth. Parents adopting this style tend to be controlling and emphasize obedience over open communication. Children raised in authoritarian households may face increased pressure to meet parental expectations, limited autonomy, and lack of emotional support.

#### **Supporting Studies:**

- A study by Barber and Harmon (2002) investigated the effects of parental psychological control, a component of authoritarian parenting, on child well-being. The researchers found that psychological control was associated with higher levels of depression and lower self-esteem in adolescents.

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- In a longitudinal study by Chang et al. (2003), researchers found that harsh parenting practices associated with the authoritarian style were related to higher levels of child aggression and lower emotion regulation skills, which are risk factors for suicidal behaviors.

### Permissive Parenting Style:

The permissive parenting style is characterized by low control, few boundaries, and high warmth. Parents adopting this style tend to be lenient and indulgent, allowing their children significant freedom without setting clear limits or expectations. This lack of structure and discipline can lead to potential negative outcomes.

#### Supporting Studies:

- A study by Youssef et al. (2013) examined the association between parenting styles and depressive symptoms in adolescents. They found that permissive parenting was linked to higher levels of depressive symptoms, which can be a precursor to suicidal ideation and behaviors.

### Neglectful Parenting Style:

The neglectful parenting style is characterized by low involvement, emotional neglect, and lack of support or supervision. Parents adopting this style may be disengaged from their children's lives and fail to provide adequate emotional or practical support.

#### Supporting Studies:

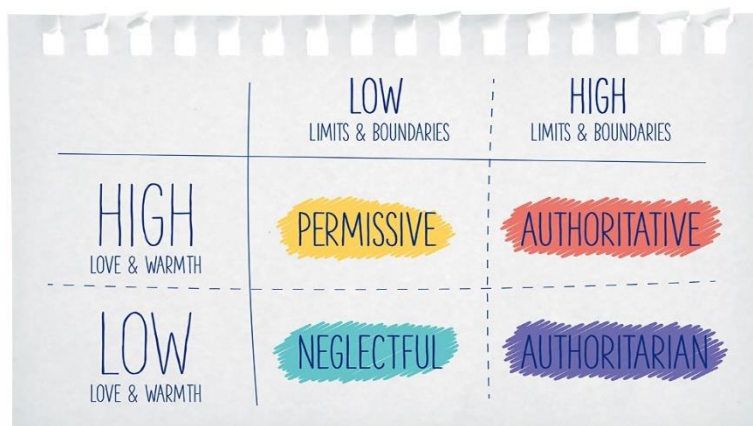
- Anderson et al. (2018) explored the experiences of adolescents who had attempted suicide, and their findings indicated that emotional neglect and lack of parental involvement were common themes in the narratives of these individuals.

### Authoritative Parenting Style:

The authoritative parenting style is characterized by high responsiveness, warmth, and reasonable expectations. Parents adopting this style balance clear rules and guidelines with open communication and emotional support. Children raised in authoritative households tend to develop better emotional regulation, social skills, and self-esteem.

#### Supporting Studies:

- Darling and Steinberg (1993) conducted a meta-analysis of studies on parenting styles and concluded that authoritative parenting was associated with positive outcomes in children, including better academic performance and mental well-being.



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### *Cultural Considerations in Parenting Styles and Suicide Risk*

Parenting styles and their impact on suicide risk can vary across cultures due to differences in cultural norms, values, and parenting practices. Understanding the cultural context is essential for interpreting the relationship between parenting styles and suicidal behaviors. Cultural conventions and values have a significant impact on parenting styles, which in turn affects how parents interact with their kids. A parent's expectations, disciplinary methods, and emotional outbursts within the parent-child connection may differ depending on the cultures in which they are practiced.

For instance, parenting frequently emphasizes interdependence, obedience, and respect for authoritative figures in collectivistic cultures, such as those seen in many Asian countries. Such cultures may be more prone to authoritarian parenting, which is characterized by stringent regulations and discipline. Children may experience greater expectations and feel more pressure to perform well as a result of this strategy, which could have an adverse effect on their mental health and general wellbeing (Triandis, 1995).

On the other hand, Individualistic cultures which are prevalent in Western civilizations, value independence, autonomy, and self-expression on the other hand. In order to foster free communication and independence in their children, parents in these cultures may adopt more lenient or authoritative parenting philosophies. However, this could also lead to more exposure to risk factors including substance abuse or outside stressors, which could affect the likelihood of suicide (Hofstede, 1980).

Cultural differences can have a substantial impact on the coping skills that are learned during childhood, which can then affect how susceptible a person is to suicide thoughts and behaviors. The manner that children learn to deal with pressures and unfavourable life events may be influenced by cultural attitudes toward emotions and mental health.

For instance, publicly expressing emotions may be discouraged or seen as a sign of weakness in some cultures. Due to internalizing their feelings and resulting increased emotional pain, children reared in such situations may develop avoidant coping mechanisms, thus increasing their risk of suicide (Eisenberg et al., 2001).

On the other hand, societies that value emotional expression and support from friends and family may encourage more flexible coping strategies. Children are more likely to improve their emotional regulation skills and use social support as a barrier against suicide thoughts in these contexts (Wang et al., 2012).

According to a study done in an indigenous community, culture influences parenting styles and mental health results. The neighbourhood placed a high importance on group decision-making and encouraged close relationships between generations. According to Abubakar et al. (2013), authoritative parenting was prevalent in this setting and was characterized by warmth, support, and shared responsibility.

Children raised with authoritative parenting demonstrated greater emotional regulation, higher self-esteem, and lower rates of suicide risk factors as compared to indigenous groups that used more authoritarian methods (McLeod et al., 2007). According to the study, cultural values had a significant impact on parenting practices, which in turn affected how children in the community fared in terms of their mental health.

***Empirical Studies Examining the Link between Parenting Styles and Suicide***

**Methodological Approaches and Limitations: Empirical Studies Examining the Relationship Between Parenting Styles and Suicide**

Numerous methodological techniques have been used in studies looking at the relationship between parenting practices and suicide risk. Cross-sectional designs, which offer a glimpse of the relationship at a particular moment but may not show causality, have been employed by some. On the other hand, longitudinal studies keep track of individuals over a longer period of time, enabling the exploration of causal linkages. By combining quantitative and qualitative methods, mixed-methods research offers a thorough grasp of the intricate nature of the connection between parenting practices and suicide risk.

**Findings from Quantitative Studies:**

In one quantitative study, Kim et al. (2021) performed a meta-analysis to investigate the relationship between parenting practices and teenage suicide behavior. The findings showed that whereas authoritarian, permissive, and negligent parenting were linked to higher risk, authoritative parenting was associated with lower suicide behavior. Youssef et al. (2013) observed in another study that adolescents who had neglectful parenting had increased depressed symptoms, which is a significant risk factor for suicide ideation and attempts.

**Findings from Qualitative Studies:**

Qualitative research has provided important insights into people's actual lived experiences with parenting practices and suicide risk. Anderson et al. (2018) explored the influence of parenting in the lives of teenagers who had tried suicide by conducting in-depth interviews with them. The results showed that those with suicide tendencies frequently experienced emotionally neglected and harsh, domineering parents.

**Mixed-Methods Studies and Longitudinal Research:**

Parenting practices were compared in a mixed-methods study by Smith et al. (2019) to parental history of maltreatment, substance use, personal adjustment, and neighbourhood deprivation. The results showed that parents with a history of abuse were more likely to exhibit poor parenting practices, which may raise their children's risk of suicide. According to longitudinal research by Gutierrez-Galve et al. (2015), there is a connection between postnatal depression in mothers and fathers and depression in children who are 18 years old. These intergenerational trends of mental illness might be influenced by parental parenting and family dynamics.

***Mechanisms Underlying the Relationship***

**Parent-Child Attachment:**

Attachment theory, developed by John Bowlby, posits that early parent-child attachment experiences play a pivotal role in shaping an individual's emotional well-being and mental health outcomes throughout life. Children who form a secure attachment with their parents tend to perceive their caregivers as reliable sources of comfort and support. This secure base fosters a sense of emotional security and resilience, enabling children to explore the world and manage stress effectively (Bowlby, 1969).

**Supporting Studies:**

- A longitudinal study by Sroufe et al. (2005) followed children from infancy to adolescence and found that those who had secure attachment relationships with their

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caregivers displayed better emotional regulation and adaptive coping strategies later in life.

- Another study by Allen et al. (2007) examined the link between attachment security and suicidal ideation in adolescents. The results indicated that insecure attachment, characterized by anxiety and avoidance, was associated with increased risk of suicidal thoughts.

### **Emotional Regulation:**

Emotional regulation refers to an individual's ability to recognize, understand, and manage their emotions effectively. Parenting styles can significantly influence the development of emotional regulation skills in children. Authoritative parenting, with its emphasis on warmth, responsiveness, and reasonable expectations, provides a supportive environment for children to learn emotional regulation strategies. On the other hand, children raised in neglectful or authoritarian environments may struggle with emotional dysregulation due to a lack of emotional support or excessive control (Eisenberg et al., 1998).

### **Supporting Studies:**

- A study by Eisenberg et al. (2001) examined the relationship between parenting styles and emotion regulation in children. The findings revealed that children raised by authoritative parents displayed higher levels of emotional understanding and better emotion regulation abilities compared to children raised by authoritarian or permissive parents.
- In a longitudinal study by Wang et al. (2012), researchers found that adolescents who experienced authoritative parenting exhibited lower levels of depressive symptoms and, subsequently, lower risk for suicidal ideation.

### **Parenting Styles and Psychopathology:**

Psychopathological symptoms, such as depression and anxiety, are significant risk factors for suicide. Parenting styles can influence the development of these symptoms in children and adolescents. Authoritarian parenting, with its rigid and controlling nature, may contribute to increased levels of anxiety and depression due to a lack of emotional support and autonomy. Neglectful parenting, characterized by emotional detachment, may leave children vulnerable to developing psychopathological symptoms as they may not receive adequate emotional care and guidance (McLeod, 2003).

### **Supporting Studies:**

- A meta-analysis by Pinquart and Kauser (2018) examined the associations between parenting styles and internalizing problems (including depression and anxiety) in children and adolescents. The results indicated that authoritarian and neglectful parenting styles were significantly associated with higher levels of internalizing problems.
- A study by McLeod et al. (2007) explored the relationship between parenting styles and depression in adolescents. The findings revealed that authoritative parenting was associated with lower levels of depression, while authoritarian and neglectful parenting were linked to higher levels of depressive symptoms.

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### **Mediating Factors and Moderating Variables:**

Mediating factors and moderating variables can influence the relationship between parenting styles and suicide risk. Mediating factors are mechanisms that explain how parenting styles may lead to suicide risk, while moderating variables influence the strength or direction of the relationship based on specific conditions or contexts.

#### **Supporting Studies:**

- A study by Rothson et al. (2009) investigated the role of peer relationships as a mediating factor between parenting styles and mental health outcomes in adolescents. The results suggested that positive peer relationships may buffer the negative impact of authoritarian parenting on mental health.
- In a cross-cultural study by Abubakar et al. (2013), researchers examined the moderating role of cultural values in the relationship between parenting styles and adolescent psychological adjustment. They found that cultural norms and values could influence the association between parenting styles and mental health outcomes, highlighting the importance of considering cultural context.

### ***Implications for Prevention and Intervention Strategies***

#### **Clinical Implications:**

The findings from this review paper have significant implications for mental health practitioners, including therapists, counselors, and psychologists. Understanding the impact of parenting styles on suicide risk allows them to tailor their interventions to address specific parenting behaviors and enhance parent-child interactions. By recognizing the importance of positive parenting practices, practitioners can work with parents to improve communication, emotional support, and parenting skills, ultimately reducing suicide risk among at-risk individuals.

For instance, in therapeutic settings, mental health professionals can engage parents in parent-child relationship-focused interventions. These interventions may involve teaching parent's effective communication strategies, active listening skills, and providing emotional validation to their children. By creating a nurturing and supportive environment at home, parents can foster a sense of emotional security and resilience in their children, reducing their vulnerability to suicidal behaviors (Kim et al., 2021).

#### **School-Based Interventions:**

Schools are crucial in promoting kids' mental health and wellbeing. A more understanding and supportive learning environment can be achieved in schools by implementing prevention programs that inform parents, teachers, and students on the impact that parenting styles have on mental health. School-based interventions can assist parents and educators in identifying potential risk factors and providing the necessary support by increasing knowledge of the effects of parenting practices on a child's development and mental health. For parents to learn effective parenting techniques and foster healthy parent-child interactions, schools can provide workshops and training sessions. These courses could go through subjects like fostering open communication, establishing appropriate limits, and developing emotional relationships with kids. In addition, schools can work with mental health experts to offer help.



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### **Policy and Community-Level Strategies:**

At the policy level, this review highlights the importance of comprehensive mental health programs that address parenting practices. Collaborative efforts between mental health professionals, policymakers, educators, and community organizations are essential to develop interventions that target parenting skills and mental health support services.

Policy initiatives can include allocating resources and funding for parenting support programs that focus on enhancing parent-child relationships and promoting positive parenting practices. By prioritizing mental health in policy agendas, communities can create a nurturing and supportive environment for families, reducing the prevalence of negative parenting styles that may contribute to suicide risk (Gutierrez-Galve et al., 2015).

Furthermore, community-based programs and support networks can play a vital role in promoting positive parenting and mental health awareness. By involving local organizations, schools, and community leaders, these programs can reach a wider audience and foster a culture of understanding and support for parents and children alike.

### ***Future Directions for Research***

Although this review study offers insightful information about the connection between parenting practices and suicide risk, more investigation is required to fully comprehend this intricate interplay. Longitudinal studies that follow people from childhood through adulthood can be the focus of future study in order to determine the long-term effects of parenting approaches on mental health outcomes. Cross-cultural study can also look at how cultural differences in parenting practices affect results in mental health that are associated to suicide risk. varied cultural norms and beliefs may have a varied impact on parenting styles and how they affect a child's development. The creation of culturally responsive therapies and prevention techniques can be influenced by an understanding of these cultural quirks (Darling & Steinberg, 1993).

Future research can also examine potential mediating and moderating factors that affect the link between parenting practices and the risk of suicide. The effects of parenting approaches on mental health outcomes may be mitigated or amplified by elements including peer relationships, social support, and personal resilience. The field can develop a more thorough understanding of the dynamic interaction between parenting practices and suicide risk by addressing these future research directions, resulting in more efficient and targeted interventions to promote children's mental health and lower suicide risk in vulnerable populations.

## **RESULTS**

The strong link between parenting practices and the risk of suicide has been clarified by this thorough review paper. According to the research, authoritative parenting, which is characterized by a high level of responsiveness, warmth, and realistic expectations, may have a protective effect against the risk of suicide. Contrarily, dictatorial, indulgent, and careless parenting methods may raise the risk of suicidal thoughts in kids and teenagers. Parent-child connection, emotional control, psychopathological results, and other critical systems all play a role in how parenting methods affect the risk of suicide.

The degree of attachment between a parent and kid has a significant impact on how emotionally healthy a person is. Secure relationship promotes emotional stability and

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resiliency, which lowers the likelihood of suicidal thoughts. On the other hand, unstable attachment patterns can cause emotional dysregulation and make a person more prone to suicidal thinking.

Parenting styles have a big impact on children's emotional regulation, or their capacity to properly control and express their emotions. With its focus on emotional support and open communication, authoritative parenting helps children develop better emotional regulation abilities, which acts as a deterrent to the risk of suicide. Other parenting approaches, on the other hand, may impede the growth of appropriate emotional regulation, making children more susceptible to suicide acts.

Parenting practices and the risk of suicide may also be mediated by psychopathological outcomes like anxiety and depression. Authoritarian and negligent parenting practices, in particular, have been connected to the emergence of psychopathological symptoms, which in turn increases the likelihood of suicide ideation and actions.

### **DISCUSSION**

#### *Interpretation and Inferences*

Through this review paper, there is a strong inclination as the data shows that parenting styles have a considerable impact on young people's risk of suicide. It is clear from a thorough examination of numerous research that authoritative parenting, which is consistent with the advocacy for loving warmth, responsiveness, and realistic expectations, reduces the risk of suicide. On the other hand, there is a worry about the possible harm that dictatorial, indulgent, or negligent parenting methods may have on how susceptible kids and teenagers are to suicide ideation.

I am personally moved by the need of a secure parent-child bond since I am a strong proponent of developing young people's emotional maturity and resilience. It confirms the conviction that fostering a safe and secure home environment is essential for enhancing mental health and decreasing the incidence of suicide thinking.

Additionally, the link between parenting practices and kids' emotional regulation fits with the perception of the value of honest dialogue and emotional support in fostering positive emotional growth. These findings highlight the need of arming parents with practical parenting techniques that can aid in emotional control and serve as a safeguard against suicide risk.

Through this review paper the understanding of the significant effects that parenting can have on mental health is increased by the mediation between parenting practices and psychopathological outcomes, such as anxiety and depression, and the risk of suicide. As a writer, I feel compelled to promote more extensive support networks that deal with parenting techniques and mental health problems to ensure a thorough strategy for preventing suicide.

I want to conclude by saying that I genuinely believe that good parenting techniques, including authoritative parenting, are important in lowering the risk of suicide in young people. I support focused interventions and support programs that empower parents and advance mental well-being because I believe in the transformative power of parental warmth, responsiveness, and reasonable expectations. This ultimately contributes to a team effort in preventing suicide among vulnerable populations.

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### *Limitations of the Existing Literature*

Although the research under discussion provides insightful information about the connection between parenting practices and suicide risk, some limitations must be addressed. Self-report measures are frequently used in studies, although they may be biased and fall short of capturing the complexity of parenting practices and their effects on mental health outcomes. Furthermore, the majority of current research uses cross-sectional designs, which makes it difficult to conclusively show causality.

Additionally, the bulk of research are carried out in particular cultural contexts, which restricts the applicability of findings to a variety of people. Parenting techniques and their consequences on suicide risk may be strongly influenced by cultural influences, prompting additional research in many cultural contexts to provide culturally sensitive therapies.

### *Recommendations for Future Research*

Future research should use a variety of methodologies, such as longitudinal designs and mixed-methods approaches, to address the limitations mentioned in the present literature. Researchers will be able to evaluate the long-term effects of parenting practices on mental health outcomes and suicide risk through longitudinal studies, which will help them better understand developmental trajectories. The intricate interplay between parenting practices, suicide risk, and potential moderating or mediating factors can be better understood by incorporating mixed-methods approaches. A greater knowledge of lived experiences and the complex elements impacting suicide risk can be achieved by combining quantitative data with qualitative insights from individuals and families.

The focus of future research should be on cross-cultural studies that look at how parenting techniques are impacted by culture norms, values, and practices, and how it affects suicide risk. The creation of preventative measures and interventions that are culturally sensitive and take into account the particular requirements of varied communities can be influenced by this research.

## **CONCLUSION**

In order to emphasize the critical role that parental actions play in influencing young people's risk of suicide, this review study concludes. By better understanding the underlying mechanisms and limitations of current studies, future study can assist in the development of effective and focused treatments to support sound parenting practices and enhance mental well-being, ultimately lowering the risk of suicide in vulnerable populations. As a result of the study's implications for clinical care, school-based therapies, public policy initiatives, and social support systems, a cooperative and comprehensive strategy to suicide prevention has been developed.

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### ***Conflict of Interest***

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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