

Effect of Parenting Styles and Different Family Income on Altruism in Adolescents

Munira. B. Punjvani¹

ABSTRACT:

The role of parents in socialization process has been a topic of considerable debate for decades. To elicit prosocial behavior in children is a major socialization goal for many parents. Therefore it is very necessary to study factors that bring out prosocial behaviors in adolescents. The relationship between parenting and children's prosocial behavior has been studied extensively; however, there have not been many such studies in India. This study focused on the role of parenting styles and the influence of the family income on the altruistic behavior of adolescents in India. Sixty participants both girls and boys under the age group of 13-19 years took part in the study, where they were divided into two groups based on the criteria of their family income, one group under the income bracket of 20,000-35,000 per month and the other, 1-1.5 lakhs per month. The influence of parenting styles on the altruistic level of adolescents was assessed by using two questionnaires, the Parental Authority Questionnaire 30-item version (PAQ) that has three subscales: permissive, authoritarian and authoritative and the Altruism Scale 30-item version (ALTS). Results show that participants with high authoritative parenting style had higher level of altruism when compared to permissive and authoritarian parenting style. Also the study found that there is no significant difference in the altruistic behavior of adolescents of the first income group ($M=38.43$) and the second income group ($M=36.17$). Therefore, the study suggests that while the difference in family income of the adolescents has a minimal effect on their altruistic behavior, parenting styles play a crucial role in their moral development.

Keywords: *Parenting styles, family income, altruism, adolescents.*

Newspapers, television or radio, are bombarded with news about human violence, cruelty, and injustice like terrorist attacks and hijackings etc. (Eisenberg, N.; Mussen, P.H., 1989). Some common anti-social behavioral problems exhibited by adolescent students include disobedience and even violence towards parents, school dropouts, smoking, alcoholism and other drug use, petty crime, and various other manifestations of juvenile delinquency (Chudhar & Chaudhari, 1993; Shukla, 1994; Simhadri 1989).

¹Student, St. Francis College for Women, Hyderabad Andhra Pradesh & India

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A great sense of confusion and disorientation has shrouded the youth, since children have easy access to sex, inappropriate language and violence through the family cable TV and the internet for teenagers. In the meantime, moral standards and values have been marked as “outdated” and treated as guidelines. Clearly, violence among children and youth is an issue that needs to be examined, understood, and ameliorated through effective, concerted and sustained efforts. (Yu-Chen Peng, 2007)

In order to prevent the development of antisocial behaviors it is important to encourage prosocial behavior and altruistic behavior in children while they are still young and receptive (Yu-Chen Peng, 2007). Furthermore, in some behavior intervention programs, results reveal that an increase in prosocial behavior is positively correlated with the reduction of aggressive behavior amongst elementary school students (Grossman et al., 1997). Thus, it is necessary to study factors that promote prosocial behaviors and altruistic behaviors in adolescents. Prosocial behavior refers to actions that benefit other people or society as a whole (Twenge, Ciarocco, Baumeister, & Bartels, 2007), where as altruism is one of the component of prosocial behavior which will be the focus of the current study. Altruism is defined as “behavior carried out to benefit another without anticipation of rewards from external sources” (Macauley; Berkowitz, 1970). Since they spend the majority of their time at home, for the purpose of this research, we will be focusing on how parents and familial income act as important factors in promoting altruistic behaviors in teenagers.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to determine if a functional relationship exists between the type of parental style used and the level of altruism in adolescents. Thus, the implication of this research seems to indicate that appropriate parenting play a key role in avoiding future youth problems, and children altruistic development.

Further, the role of different family incomes on the altruistic level of adolescents is also examined. Thus, this study focuses on the role of two factors; parenting styles and family income, on the altruistic behavior of adolescents in India. More specifically, the following hypotheses are proposed:

1. Parenting styles have an influence on the altruistic level of the adolescents.
2. The level of altruism varies in adolescents belonging to different income groups.

DEFINITIONS

Prosocial behavior

The term prosocial behavior arose in the 1970s, leading to psychological analysis of the giving, helping, and sharing processes. The nonresponsive bystanders in the brutal Katherine “Kitty” Genovese murder in 1964, as well as the 1960s Civil Rights Movement refuting racial discrimination, further prompted examination of human nature and the significance of helping others (Knickerbockers, 2003).

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Prosocial behavior is defined as voluntary behavior that is carried out to benefit another without anticipation of external rewards and is performed under two circumstances (a) the behavior is done for its own end, and (b) the behavior is done as an act of restitution.”(Bar-Tal, 1976)

Prosocial behavior can be defined as voluntary actions intended to help or benefit another individual or group of individuals (Knickerbocker, 2003). While these actions benefit the recipient, they can also be costly to the doer (Bénabou, 2005). One is thus faced with the decision to help others at the expense of oneself (Simpson, 2008). When considering prosocial behavior, the external, explicit actions are emphasized; as opposed to the internal, implicit motivations for those prosocial actions. Prosocial behavior entails both the physical and mental amelioration of others (Knickerbocker, 2003).

According to Eisenberg and Mussen (1997, p. 3), prosocial behavior refers to "voluntary actions that are intended to help or benefit another individual or group of individuals." Thus, prosocial behaviors are defined in terms of their intended consequences for others and are performed voluntarily rather than out of demand.

Although the intention behind prosocial actions is to benefit others, prosocial actions may be performed for a variety of reasons. For example, an individual may be motivated to assist someone in order to get a reward in return, to gain the approval of others, or to express the sympathy that is truly felt for that person. (Yu-Chen Peng, 2007)

ALTRUISM

The term altruism is sometimes used interchangeably with prosocial behaviour, but true altruism is an unselfish concern for the welfare of others.

Auguste Comte, French philosopher and sociologist, first introduced the term (Encyclopedia of Britannica, 1967, Vol.8). Probably he came to adapt the term from the Italian *altrui*. For him altruism was an unselfish regard for the welfare of others.

Altruism refers to one specified type of prosocial behavior – voluntary actions intended to benefit another that are intrinsically motivated-that is acts motivated by internal motives such as concern and sympathy for others or by values and self rewards rather than personal gains. Internalized values that instigate altruism include a belief in the importance of others’ welfare or justice. individuals may reinforce or reward them selves with feelings of self esteem pride or self satisfaction when they behave in ways consistent with those internalized values and they may punish themselves (with guilt or feeling of worthlessness)when they do not (Bandura,1977,1986).

Altruism is characterized by an emphasis on the needs of the others, concern about his or her well being, and finding a solution for his or her problem. The definition of altruism in Webster’s new encyclopedic dictionary (1993) is “unselfish interest in or care for the welfare of others.”

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Altruism is the behavior of placing others before oneself. Humans have a unique capacity for altruism that anthropological game theory experiments have found replicable across all cultures. (E Fehr, U Fischbacher - Nature, 2003)

According to Bryan and Test (1967) altruism means “those acts where in individual’s sharing or sacrifice is a positive reinforcer for no apparent social or material gain.”

Welster and Pavilian (1972) hold that “altruistic behavior is generally thought of as behavior that benefits another rather than the self, when something is done out of goodness of one’s heart.”

Leeds (1973) presents three conditions for altruistic behavior; (i) it must be treated as an end itself, (ii) it must be elicited voluntarily, and (iii) it must be judged by others as doing good.

While there are differences about the precise definition of altruism, there is a general agreement that altruistic behavior must be carried out volunteering, must aim to benefit another and must be carried out without anticipation of reward.

PARENTING

Parenting is one of the most difficult tasks that adults face. While most of them enter the world of parenting with little instructions or guidance; they mainly use trial and error in their attempts to be effective parents (Forehand, Rex; Long,Nicholas,1996) . As a result, it is crucial to investigate the kinds of parental practices and values that truly stimulate children’s growth and their character development.

Parenting styles

Darling and Steinberg define parenting styles as “a constellation of attitude towards the child that are communicated to the child and create an emotional climate in which the parent’s behaviors are expressed.”

However, with the development of Baumrind’s classification of parenting styles, studies began to converge as this classification gained popularity.

During the early 1960s, psychologist Diana Baumrind conducted a study on more than 100 preschool-age children (Baumrind, 1967). Using naturalistic observation, parental interviews and other research methods, she identified four important dimensions of parenting:

- Disciplinary strategies
- Warmth and nurturance
- Communication styles
- Expectations of maturity and control

Based on these dimensions, Baumrind suggested that the majority of parents display one of three different parenting styles. Further research by also suggested the addition of a fourth parenting style (Maccoby & Martin, 1983).

THE FOUR PARENTING STYLES

Authoritarian Parenting

In this style of parenting, children are expected to follow the strict rules established by the parents. Failure to follow such rules usually results in punishment. Authoritarian parents fail to explain the reasoning behind these rules. If asked to explain, the parent might simply reply, "Because I said so." These parents have high demands, but are not responsive to their children. According to Baumrind, these parents "are obedience- and status-oriented, and expect their orders to be obeyed without explanation" (1991).

Authoritative Parenting

Like authoritarian parents, those with an authoritative parenting style establish rules and guidelines that their children are expected to follow. However, this parenting style is much more democratic. Authoritative parents are responsive to their children and willing to listen to questions. When children fail to meet the expectations, these parents are more nurturing and forgiving rather than punishing. Baumrind suggests that these parents "monitor and impart clear standards for their children's conduct. They are assertive, but not intrusive and restrictive. Their disciplinary methods are supportive, rather than punitive. They want their children to be assertive as well as socially responsible, and self-regulated as well as cooperative" (1991).

Permissive Parenting

Permissive parents, sometimes referred to as indulgent parents, have very few demands to make of their children. These parents rarely discipline their children because they have relatively low expectations of maturity and self-control. According to Baumrind, permissive parents "are more responsive than they are demanding. They are nontraditional and lenient, do not require mature behavior, allow considerable self-regulation, and avoid confrontation" (1991). Permissive parents are generally nurturing and communicative with their children, often taking on the status of a friend more than that of a parent.

Uninvolved Parenting

An uninvolved parenting style is characterized by few demands, low responsiveness and little communication. While these parents fulfill the child's basic needs, they are generally detached from their child's life. In extreme cases, these parents may even reject or neglect the needs of their children.

THE IMPACT OF PARENTING STYLES

In addition to Baumrind's initial study of 100 preschool children, researchers have conducted numerous other studies that have led to a number of conclusions about the impact of parenting styles on children.

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- Authoritarian parenting styles generally lead to children who are obedient and proficient, but they rank lower in happiness, social competence and self-esteem.
- Authoritative parenting styles tend to result in children who are happy, capable and successful (Maccoby, 1992).
- Permissive parenting often results in children who rank low in happiness and self-regulation. These children are more likely to experience problems with authority and tend to perform poorly in school.
- Uninvolved parenting styles rank lowest across all life domains. These children tend to lack self-control, have low self-esteem and are less competent than their peers.

Family income

Family income counts all the income of all residents over the age of 18 in each household, including not only all wages and salaries, but such items as unemployment insurance, disability payments, child support payments, regular rental receipts, as well as any personal business, investment, or other kinds of income received routinely. (www.hud.gov)

LITERATURE REVIEW

Parenting styles

A historical review of parenting researches would reveal that for decades, researchers have been trying to find the most appropriate ways in which to classify parental behaviors into different styles. Two dimensional approaches developed into three dimensional ones and still variability existed in parental behaviors. Additionally, as Maccoby and Martin (1983) have noticed, the dimensions that emerged in the studies were often only weakly related to the theories from which they were formulated. For example, the dimension “warmth” is really only vaguely relevant to the psychoanalytic theory from which it was developed, being a factor that can be conceptualized as drawing children away from entertaining aggressive impulses toward their parents. As more studies proceeded, single dimensional theories were developed, but consensus could still not be gained from other theorists.

However, with the development of Baumrind’s (1967) classification of Parenting Styles, studies began to converge as this classification gained popularity. In this Research, Baumrind’s classification of parenting styles will be used; as a result it is crucial to understand Baumrind’s dimensions of parenting patterns. A look into the devising process of her classification reveals that Baumrind (1967) developed a parenting style typology which consists of three parenting styles: authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive/neglectful. Authoritative parenting style is associated with warm and responsive parents in addition to high control and demand. Authoritarian parenting style is associated with low measures of warmth and responsiveness and high level of control. Permissive parenting style varies in degree of warmth with some being very warm and indulgent while other are cooler and lack interest in the child. (Durkin, 1995)

Parenting style and prosocial behavior

In the past few decades, there has been an increase in studies on the relationship between parenting and children's prosocial behavior. Considering the family to be the place where socialization begins, it is no surprise that researchers would look to parenting styles in order to understand more about children's prosocial behavior. For the past decade, researchers have been questioning the influence of parenting as opposed to the influence of children's genetic makeup and peer culture. Though not the sole influence, parents exert a profound influence on their children's behaviors.

The impact of parenting on children's prosocial behavior has been studied extensively (e.g., Eisenberg & Fabes, 1998; Grusec, Davidov, & Lundell, 2002). If interaction of parent with child is active and positive, the child performs more prosocially; however, if parents ignore, reject or neglect their child, the child may easily feel inferior and retreat when he or she experiences setbacks and such a child may be emotionally less stable and less prosocial as well (Lo, 1997).

The interaction of emotional processes, regulatory mechanisms and parenting styles modulate prosocial behavior and aggressiveness (Bandura, 1999; Eisenberg, 2000; Carlo et al., 1999 y Gloria, 2001).

The family environment is significant in the development of prosocial behaviour, as the marital relationship and other significant relationships provide the models for caring relationships in the household, as well as for the values of that family (Robinson & Zahn-Waxler, 1994).

The quality of child-rearing and early companionship has been shown to have a profound impact on prosocial behaviour (Braten, 1996).

Hetherington and colleagues (Hetherington et al., 1999) discovered a moderately high correlation between authoritative parenting and adolescents' social responsibility for mothers.

In Taiwan, a number of researches are consistent with the finding that children of authoritative parents perform more prosocial behaviors than those of neglectful parents (Zao, 1987; Lo, 1997; Chen, 2006). In addition, it has been found that junior high school teenagers of authoritative parents have less deviated behaviors than those of neglectful parents (Zhou, 2001; Sun, 2002).

Parents who are demanding without warmth and sensitivity (the authoritarian style) may actually interfere with prosocial development. At least for toddlers, this parenting style has been associated with reductions in children's empathic responding (Robinson, Zahn-Waxler, & Emde, 1994).

Moral development on the whole, is most effectively launched when parents are authoritative in their style: on one hand, warm, responsive, and sensitive in their care giving and, on the other hand, demanding, requiring that children live up to standards and values appropriate to their level of maturity. (P.C. Broderick; P. Blewitt, 2006).

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Prosocial behavior has been shown to be stimulated from parents who expect and demand social responsibility and moral behavior (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1998).

Parenting styles that include power-assertiveness and physical punishment with a deprivation of privileges, have either had no relationship or a negative relationship on the development of prosocial behavior. Physical abuse is negatively related to the development of prosocial behavior and empathy (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1998).

There are also a number of other specific characteristics of parenting that seems to foster children's altruism. First, when parents have strong prosocial values, their elementary-school-aged children are more likely to be seen by peers as prosocial (Hoffman, 1975). Similarly, adults who show unusual prosocial tendencies, such as "rescuers" of Nazi victims in Europe during World War II, frequently report having had parents who strongly valued caring and helping behaviors (Oliner & Oliner, 1988). Second, adult modeling of prosocial behavior seems to influence children's altruism. On the whole, models who are perceived by children as competent, models who have long-term, nurturant relationships with children, and models who express happiness after prosocial behavior (rather than receiving tangible rewards for their behavior) tend to foster children's prosocial behavior (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1998). Also, providing children with opportunities for prosocial action seems to help encourage a commitment to altruistic action. (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1998).

Parental responsiveness is important to foster prosocial behavior in children. Particularly, it is more likely for parents to raise prosocial children by using the authoritative parenting style (high on parental responsiveness) as compared to the authoritarian and the neglectful parenting style (both low on parental responsiveness). (Yu-Chen Peng, 2007)

Parents who have positive feelings toward their children and provide positive, noncoercive discipline have children who are relatively more prosocial. The opposite is true for parents high in negativity toward their children. (A Knafo & R Plomin, 2006)

Children's prosocial behaviors are largely learnt from observing and imitating adults who demonstrate appropriate behaviors, i.e. modeling (Bandura, 1977; Grusec, 1988).

Mills and Grusec (1989) indicate that once children acquire a moral response, such as sharing or telling the truth, reinforcement in the form of praising the act and the child's character increases its frequency. It is important to emphasize the enormous power parents and caregivers possess to influence the behaviors of a child since they are often the major "important others" of the child, being the ones most closely connected to the child socially and emotionally.

Nevertheless, other researches, such as Chen (2003) found no difference between the prosocial behaviors of children reared by different parenting styles.

Socio cultural differences and prosocial behavior

The influence of social status as a moderator of prosocial behavior is that, which the higher cost of living in a community is negatively correlated with willingness to act prosocially. As cost of living is highly correlated with the income generated, it could be justified that certain facets of social status are systematically linked with prosocial behavior. This could have important implications for the prediction of the level of prosocial behavior in societies in which income level is raising it points the possibility of the emergence of a society in which a combination of high income and low compassion will lead to wealth but cold heartedness. A more comprehensive sociological understanding of prosocial behavior is currently only beginning to emerge. Social status which is related to economic differences between social classes constitutes one of the most important systems of inequality in society. Where the independence of the higher income groups rests upon possessions and high level skills, the lower income groups are characterized by a social tradition of reciprocal support systems. So there is great need to in the contemporary society to study more about these social roots of prosocial behavior. (Hans Werner Bierhoff-prosocial behaviour, 2002)

More altruism and generosity in subjects participating from upper class was found when compared with the subjects of middle and working class that go on the same line. (Carlo et al., 1999; Samper, 1999, Mestre et al., 2001 y Gloria 2001)

Another finding reported that socio economic status is partly related to altruistic behavior. (Christiansen, John R.; Blake, Reed H. 1975)

Another research found out that lower class persons are characterized by certain modes of behavior which operate against altruism. (Hodges, 1964)

Lewis Coser has written, moreover, that the poor becomes “infantilized” through given them in efforts to assist them. In other words, programs designed to help the poor tend to make them more dependent and, it might be assumed, less likely to take independent stance required to be altruistic.(Coser, *The Sociology of Poverty*, Vol.13,1964)

SUMMARY:

Based on the above researches different parenting styles do seem to influence the cognition, emotions and behaviors of children. Still we need to understand more about parenting in relation with child's outcomes to raise our children in more appropriate manners and in healthier environments. In so doing, we will then be able to equip them with the ability to “make the better choice” when situations arise, knowing that parents' responsiveness and demandingness as perceived by the child can greatly affect the child's behavior outside the home. Thus, the effect of parenting on children's prosocial behavior require further investigation and this research that studies the influence of parenting styles on the altruistic level in adolescents will seek to find an answer to this problem.

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Based on the above theoretical notions one can also say that possibilities exist that varied socio-cultural differences modify the extent of altruism. However, there have not been many studies regarding influence of different income groups on the level of altruism in adolescents in India and hence the need.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

In order to test the hypothesis of this study participant were selected by the means of simple random technique. The final analytic sample size of this study was 60 with 30 boys (50%) and 30 girls (50%) in total, who ranged from 13 to 19 years old in age. They were divided into two groups based their family's income. One group consisted of a familial income of Rs. 20,000-35,000 per month and the other, of Rs. 1-1.5 lakhs per month. The Parental Authority Questionnaire 30-item version (PAQ) that has three subscales: permissive, authoritarian and authoritative and the Altruism Scale 30-item version (ALTS) were then administered to the participants by the researcher. A brief introduction of the purpose and procedure of the questionnaire and an assurance of anonymity were given to the participants before they completed the questionnaires.

Instruments

Demographic backgrounds, including information such as subjects' sex, age, Parents' occupation and family income (per month), were collected from the subjects.

There were two instruments used in this study. The parental authority questionnaire was used to measure the parenting styles and the altruism scale was used to assess the level of altruism in adolescents.

Parental Authority Questionnaire

This questionnaire was developed by Dr. John R. Buri, (1991) for the purpose of measuring Baumrind's (1971) permissive, authoritarian, and authoritative parental authority prototypes. It consists of 30 items per parent and yields permissive, authoritarian, and authoritative scores for both the mother and the father; each of these scores is derived from the phenomenological appraisals of the parents' authority by their son or daughter. The PAQ has three subscales and consist of 30 items ,out of these 10 items relate to permissive parenting style (P: items 1, 6, 10, 13, 14, 17, 19, 21, 24 and 28), another 10 items relate to authoritarian parenting style (A: items 2, 3,7, 9, 12, 16, 18, 25, 26 and 29), and the remaining 10 questions related to authoritative/flexible parenting style.(F: items 4, 5, 8, 11, 15, 20, 22,23, 27, and 30).

A 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither agree nor disagree ,4 = Agree, 5 = strongly agree)was used and was scored easily by summing the individual items to comprise the subscale scores. Scores on each subscale range from 10 to 50.

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The PAQ demonstrates highly respectable measures of reliability and validity. It is useful for assessing the parental authority exercised by both mothers and fathers and it is appropriate for both females and males who are older adolescents or young adults. Its potential as a research tool in the investigation of individual correlates of parental permissiveness, authoritarian, and authoritativeness is promising. (Buri, John R., 1989)

Altruism scale

The Altruism Scale (ALTS) was developed by S. N. Rai and S. Singh in Hindi language with 30 items that measures the altruistic tendency of adolescents. Each item has three alternative responses, say altruistic, neutral and egoistic. This group test is meant for 10 to 19 years age group adolescents.

The responses obtained in the form of tick marks on 30 items of altruistic scale are quantified. A score of two for altruistic, one for neutral and zero for egoistic is awarded to each item of the scale. The maximum score is sixty and the minimum is zero.

This scale has been found to be highly reliable and valid. Reliability of altruistic scale was determined by test-retest method. After one month's interval retest was done. The reliability coefficient was .84 with reliability index of .92 which was statistically significant. The obtained reliability coefficient indicates that the scale possesses a fair amount of stability assessing the extent of altruism. The scores of validity coefficient on altruistic scale is .63 which was significant at .01 level of confidence. The obtained validity index indicates that the scale does measure the extent of altruism. (Rai, S.N; Singh, S)

PROCEDURE

Consent forms were given to each subject in order to gain permission for participation. Two questionnaires, namely the Parental Authority Questionnaire 30-item version (PAQ) (Buri, J.R., 1991) and the Altruism Scale 30-item version (ALTS) (S. N. Rai and S. Singh) were then administered. The purpose and procedure were briefly explained by the researcher. The researcher asked the participants to evaluate the language of the questionnaires. In cases where the subjects thought the language of the questionnaire to be too difficult, the researcher read each question. The researcher collected both the questionnaire after the subjects completed them.

Data analysis

Only subjects who completed both the questionnaire in their entirety were included in the final results of the study.

RESULTS

The main goal of the present study is to analyze the impact parenting styles have on the altruistic level of adolescents. For this purpose an ANOVA was performed to explore whether or not different parenting styles had effects on subjects' altruistic levels. Results showed that parenting styles did indeed have significant effects on level of altruism in adolescents. In addition, an analysis of correlation was performed to explore the relationship between different parenting styles and altruistic levels.

Another aim of the present study was to assess the impact of the different family incomes on the teenager's altruism. As mentioned earlier the participants for this purpose were divided into two equal groups based on the criteria of their family income that was mentioned in the demographic information. Presented below is a table 1 showing the descriptive data regarding the level of altruism in different income groups.

Table 1

Mean standard deviation, t-ratio and p value for the 1st and the 2nd income group.

Income groups	Mean (M)	Standard deviation (SD)	't'	'p'
1) 1 st income group (20,000-35,000)	38.43	7.12	1.3256	0.1902
2) 2 nd income group (1-1.5 lakhs)	36.17	6.09		

Thus, the study found that there is no significant difference in the altruistic behavior of adolescents of the first income group and the second income group.

DISCUSSION

The intent of this study was to examine the impact different parenting styles have in regard to the level of altruism in adolescents. In terms of parenting styles, in the past, whenever parenting styles were compared, the results almost always revealed authoritative parenting as the more appropriate style (Zhou et al., 2008; Kochanska et al., 2003; Landry et al., 2006). Similarly, in this study authoritative parenting style was found to be more appropriate style. Moreover, from the results obtained, we see that children reared by authoritative parents were significantly more altruistic than those reared by authoritarian and permissive parents.

LIMITATIONS

There are certain limitations of the current study: the small number of participants, the time-constraints for data collection, and the Hindi language of the altruism scale.

If data had been collected on more participants it might have been possible to find the necessary variance among the participants needed to run a statistical analysis. Thus, the effect of different income groups on adolescent's altruism level is still largely unknown and unexamined.

The altruism scale used to examine the level of altruism in adolescents had a few weaknesses in its use. Since the questionnaire was in Hindi, some participants faced a little difficulty in reading and understanding the terms used. The questions were then read to them and recorded by the researcher. The subjects may not have been able to make accurate attribution inferences.

The third limitation of this study was the lengthy data collection process. As both the questionnaires used were lengthy, it took approximately 25-30 minutes per subject to collect data. If the data collection instrument was developed to collect data in less time than one used in current study, then it would be easier to gather data from large number of participants.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

There are several studies that address the influence parents have on their child's prosocial development but not very many that address the impact specifically on altruistic development. Since this is an issue that likely develops in the formative years it would be beneficial for researchers to examine its impact on altruism so that interventions may be developed and implemented for high altruistic development in children.

The study on altruism is particularly important for understanding socialization process (Rushton, 1976). Therefore, the study of conditions for altruism becomes important for conducting the affairs of life. Actually altruism is indispensable for the survival of society and human life. (Rai, S.N; Singh, S)

Parenting influences cannot solely account for development and maintenance of altruistic development in children. Thus, researchers should look into other casual factors such as teacher, peer and sibling influences on altruistic development. Likely, there are several factors that promote and maintain altruistic behavior. In order to develop appropriate interventions that can be implemented to encourage altruistic behavior, researchers must address a multitude of casual factors.

CONCLUSION

Despite the limitations in the current studies, this research does present significant findings, which have implications for parenting as well as future research. In the current study, the importance of parenting styles in fostering altruistic behavior in children is discovered. Particularly, it is more likely for parents to raise altruistic children by using the authoritative

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parenting style as compared to the authoritarian and the permissive parenting style. The study also found that there is no significant difference in the altruistic behavior of adolescents and thus it suggests that while the difference in family income of the adolescents has a minimal effect on their altruistic behavior, parenting styles play a crucial role in the development of altruism.

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