

# **The Effect of Parenting Styles on Homework and GPA**

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**Abstract**

This study investigated the effect of parenting styles on homework and GPA. Previous research has examined how certain parenting styles, especially authoritative, affect academics. We hypothesize that authoritative parenting will have a positive effect on homework and GPA, authoritarian parenting will affect homework and GPA, and permissive parenting will have a negative effect on Homework and GPA. Fifty-four Neighborhood Academy students took a parental authority questionnaire that gave us a score for each of the parenting styles. Students' GPAs and homework records were also gathered. We found that Authoritative parenting had no relationship with homework and GPA, authoritarian parenting had a negative relationship between homework and GPA, and we found no relationship between permissive parenting and homework and GPA. Our data suggest that at The Neighborhood Academy, parenting styles may not influence grades much. In fact, some parenting styles could have a negative effect on students' academic outcomes.

## Introduction

Parenting styles can affect how children do in school. In the 39 most recent parenting studies, all of them found that authoritative parenting, a style that is both demanding and responsive, is the most effective parenting style (1). Other researchers at The Neighborhood Academy (TNA) have found that the authoritarian parenting style, which is punitive and demanding, is also effective (2). Given that these two parenting styles don't match, it is important for us to find out which one has more support at TNA. Other research has investigated how the four parenting styles (authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and uninvolved) of both mothers and fathers can affect both grades and behaviors (3,4). This is important because understanding a good relationship could help parents and teachers improve children's academics. In our study, we administered a Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ) to measure parenting styles and to collect information about students' grades and homework.

The four different types of parenting styles are authoritarian, authoritative, uninvolved, and permissive (5). The four parenting styles are separated by expectations and responsiveness. Expectations are what the parent wants to see the child do, while responsiveness describes how the parent responds to what the child does. Authoritarian parents focus on obedience and strict rules. They are "because I said so" parents. Children may often rebel or have low self-esteem because the parent is not involved. Permissive parents avoid saying no and want their children to be happy. Children tend to have boundary issues and struggle in school. Uninvolved parenting is the most harmful; children " fend for themselves" when parents are not interested in their wants and needs, and children often have high anxiety and stress. Authoritative parenting is a combination of emotional warmth and high expectations. Children often form strong attachments and take responsibility, and can make good decisions and follow rules (5). This is important to our study because other studies at TNA found that authoritarian parenting produces the best outcome, but this article says authoritative is the best. Finding out which is better is the goal of our study.

Parents, especially fathers, can affect the way a child does in school. Thakre and Shet conducted a study on academic motivation and study habits based on parenting styles in fathers (4). This study consisted of 76 adolescent girls and boys with an age range of 13 to 14 from India, in the 8th and 9th grades. They were asked to take three different tests measuring parental authority, study habits, and academic motivation. The results showed that there is a significant difference between parenting styles on study habits and academic achievement. Authoritative parenting styles have a significant positive effect on academic motivation and study habits (4). This is important because we are interested in grades and behavior, and motivation is related to grades. Students who lack the motivation to work are unlikely to do well.

Different parenting styles and perceptions of school climate can determine academic achievement (2). Myers and Scott did a study on academic achievement based on different parenting styles and school climate in the Neighborhood Academy. This consisted of TNA students in grades 9th through 11th. They were asked to take a survey called the Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ) and were put into a category based on the survey. The results were that permissive parenting did not have a positive effect on academic achievement.

Authoritarian parenting had a positive effect on academic achievement. However, authoritative parenting had little to no effect on academic achievement. School climate also did not affect academic achievement. In our opinion, we think parenting styles matter till you get older, then you have the choice of making your own decisions, which is ultimately affected by you and your choices.

Masud et al. conducted a literature review on many studies of parenting styles on the academic achievement of young adolescents (1). They found from 39 other studies that there are relationships between parenting styles and academic achievement in adolescents. Specifically, authoritarian parenting is more effective than authoritarian and permissive parenting. The authors think this is because of a higher emotional intelligence; children with authoritative parents would respond to negative setbacks by having a mature response and taking steps to do better instead of just being helpless. Authoritative parenting is an effective predictor of academic performance in all 39 studies. However, how effective authoritative parenting is and if other styles work is also based on ethnicity, culture, and age, among other reasons (1). This is similar to my study because I am studying academic achievement in young children. Specifically, we are interested in whether TNA's unique culture has any influence on which parents do better here.

Overall, the research says that parenting style does affect grades. The parenting style with the most evidence for a positive effect is authoritative parenting (1). This study contributes by continuing a previous study at The Neighborhood Academy by Myers and Scott in 2020 (2). This study found that authoritarian parenting was the most effective style. In our study, we will give people a Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ) and look at their GPA to look for a relationship between the two.

First, we hypothesize that there is a positive relationship between authoritative parents and GPA and homework. This is because research suggests that authoritative parents are the most helpful (5). Second, we hypothesize that there is a relationship between authoritarian parents and GPA. This is because research suggests that authoritarian parents are too inflexible (5), but other research at TNA suggests it is helpful (2). Third, we hypothesize there is a negative relationship between permissive parents and GPA. This is because research suggests that permissive parents are not involved enough (5).

## **Materials and Methods**

A total of 54 high school students from The Neighborhood Academy participated in the study. All the participants were African American, composed of males (%) and females (%) from grades 9-12 and between the ages of 14 and 19.

The participants were given a survey known as the Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ) to get scores for their parental authority (6). This survey consisted of 30 statements in total, where the participant had to answer 1-5 how much he/she agreed that it described his or her parent. If someone had more than one parent, they were instructed to describe the parent most involved. An example of a permissive parenting style is, "While I was growing up, my parents felt that in a well-run home, the children should have their way in the family as often as

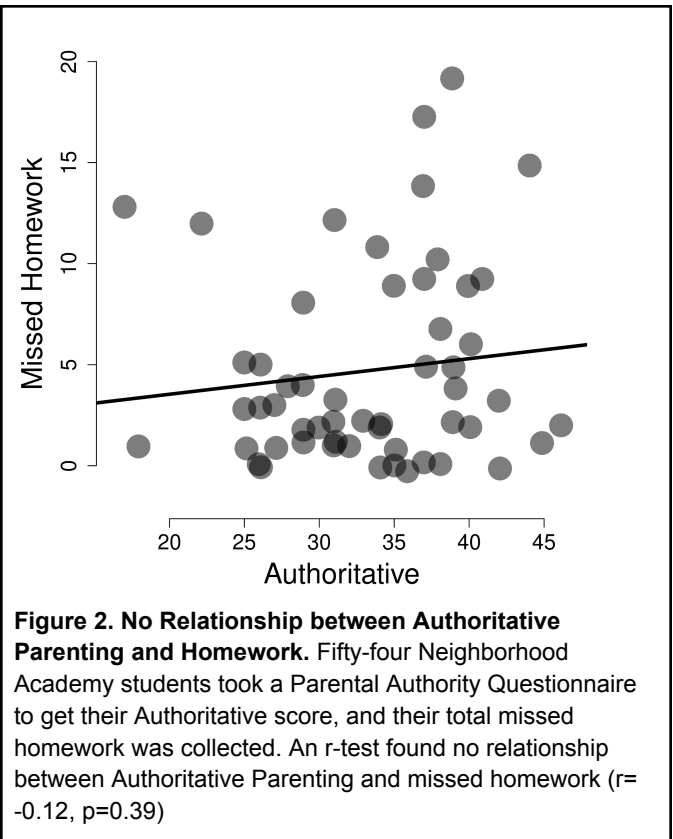
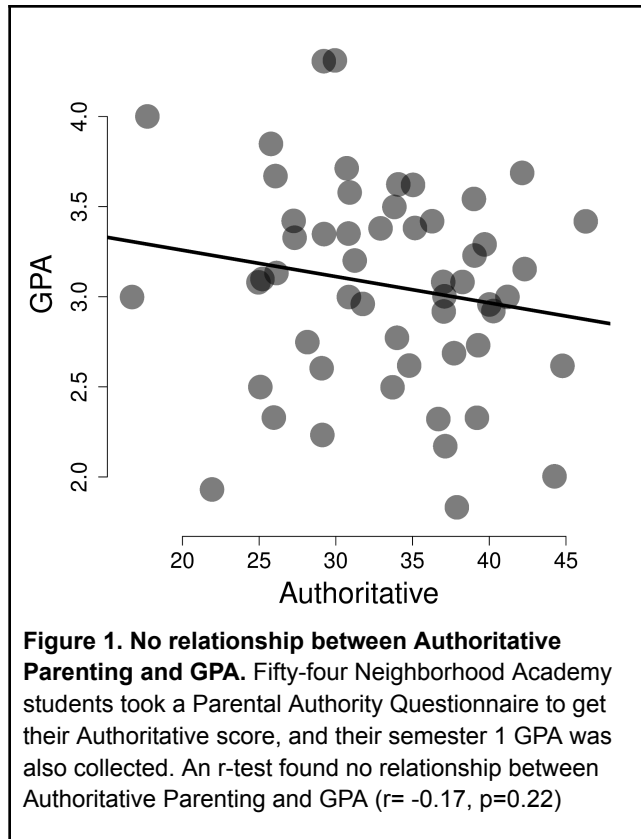
the parents do". For authoritarian parents, "Even if their children did not agree with them, my parents felt that it was for our own good if we were forced to conform to what they thought was right". Lastly, for authoritative, "As I was growing up, once the family policy had been established, my parents discussed the reasoning behind the policy with the children in the family." For each parenting style, a person has a score ranging from 10 to 50.

First, we approached a teacher to ask if we could use their class time to take the survey. Once we said yes, we then came into the class and asked the students to sign the consent form and then fill out the survey. The student received a bag of chips as compensation for taking our survey. Finally, a school administrator pulled the students' homework records and GPAs and added them to our data set, then they removed the names. Relationships between parenting styles and homework were found using a correlation coefficient r-test. All tests were calculated using vassarstats.net with a 0.05 significance threshold.

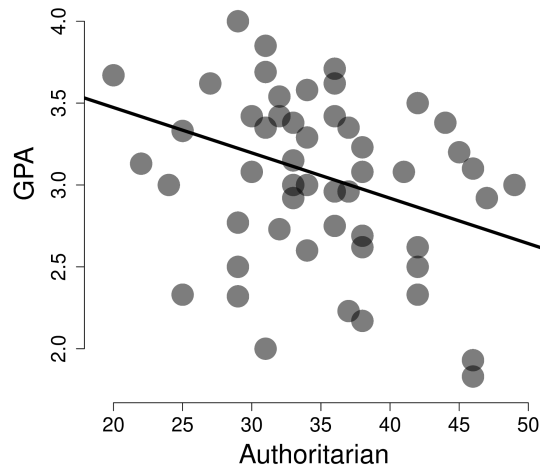
## **Results**

The purpose of our project is to test the parental style of students at The Neighborhood Academy and how it relates to their missed homework and GPA. A total of 54 students took the Parental Authority Questionnaire, which permitted us to select their missed homework and GPA. Authoritarian is the most common parenting style, with 28 students reporting that style as the highest score. Authoritative is the second most common with 18 students reporting that as their highest score, and Permissive with the lowest score with 3 students reporting their highest score.

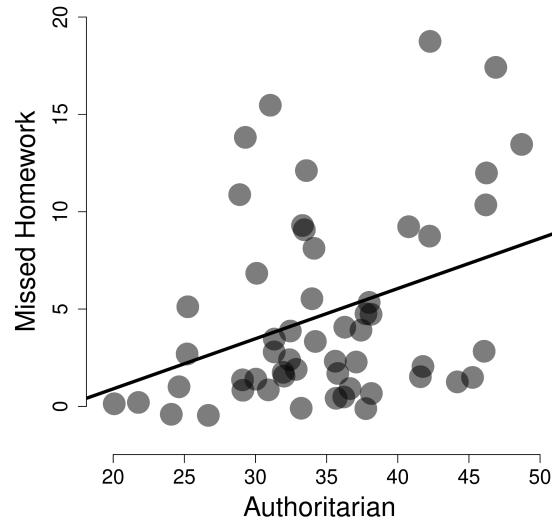
First, we hypothesized that authoritative parenting would have a positive relationship with GPA and homework. The authoritative parenting score of the 54 students comes from the Parental Authority Questionnaire, the GPA was the first semester GPA for this current school year, and the homework score is the number of missed homework assignments in all classes in terms 1 and 2. A correlation coefficient r-test found no relationship between authoritative parenting and GPA ( $r = -0.17$ ,  $p = 0.22$ ). We also found no relationship between authoritative parenting and missed homework ( $r = 0.12$ ,  $p = 0.39$ ). This suggests that authoritative parenting has no influence on the grades or homework records of students at TNA.



Second, we hypothesized that authoritarian parenting would have a relationship with GPA and homework. A correlation coefficient r-test found a negative relationship between authoritative parenting and GPA ( $r = -0.33$ ,  $p = 0.02$ ). We also found a negative relationship between authoritarian parenting and missed homework ( $r = 0.35$ ,  $p = 0.01$ ). This suggests that authoritarian parenting has a negative influence on the grades and homework records of students at TNA. This shows that the more authoritarian parenting style is associated with worse students' GPAs and missed homework assignments.

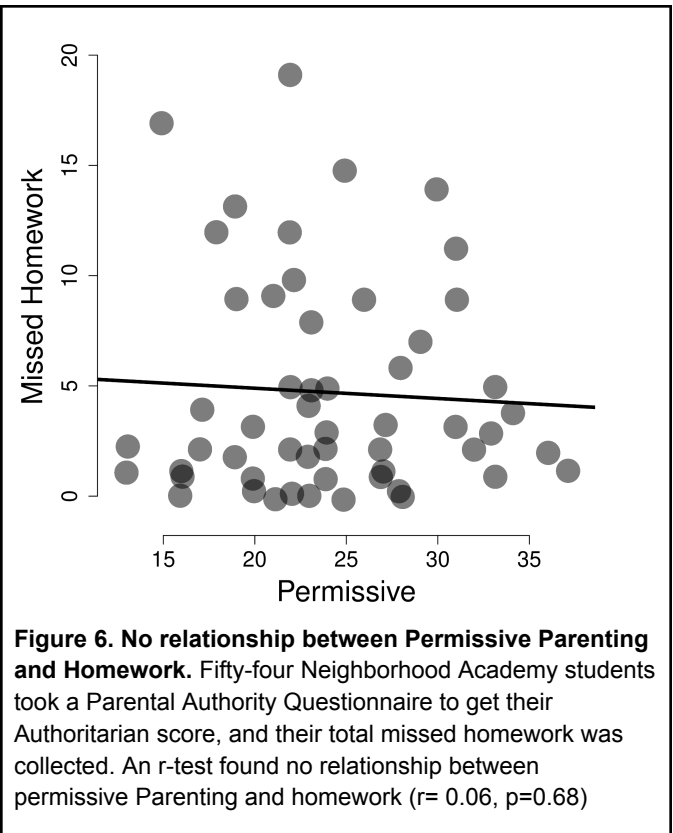
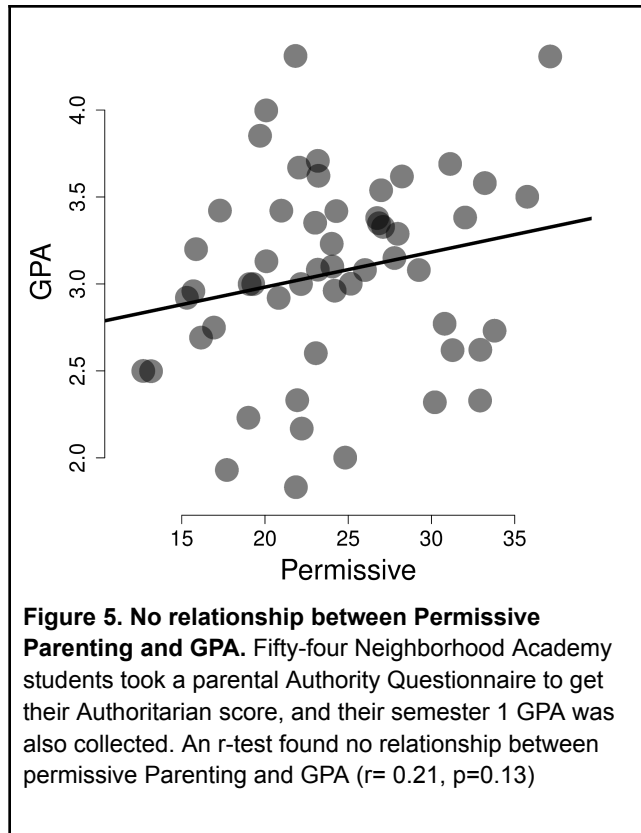


**Figure 3. Negative Relationship between Authoritarian Parenting and GPA.** Fifty-four Neighborhood Academy students took a parental Authority Questionnaire to get their Authoritarian score, and their semester 1 GPA was also collected. A r-test found a bad relationship between Authoritarian Parenting and GPA ( $r = -0.33$ ,  $p = 0.02$ ). The more Authoritarian a person's parents are, the worse their GPA is.



**Figure 4. Negative Relationship between Authoritarian Parenting and Homework.** Fifty-four Neighborhood Academy students took a Parental Authority Questionnaire to get their Authoritarian score, and their total missed homework was collected. An r-test found a bad relationship between Authoritarian parenting and missed homework. The more authoritarian a person's parents are, the more homework they miss. ( $r = 0.35$ ,  $p = 0.01$ )

Third, we hypothesized that permissive parenting would have a negative relationship with GPA and missed homework. A correlation coefficient r-test found no relationship between Permissive parenting and GPA ( $r = 0.21$ ,  $p = 0.13$ ). We also found no relationship between Permissive parenting and missed homework ( $r = 0.06$ ,  $p = 0.68$ ). This suggests that permissive parenting has no influence on the grades and homework records of students at TNA.



## Discussion

In this study, we looked at The Neighborhood Academy students' GPAs and missed homework assignments to determine whether or not their parents' parenting style had anything to do with it. Our first hypothesis was that authoritative parenting would have a positive relationship with GPA and homework. This was not supported because no relationship was detected. **(Figures 1 and 2)** Our second hypothesis was that authoritarian parenting would have a relationship with GPA and homework. This was supported because authoritarian parenting had a negative effect on homework and GPA. **(Figures 3 and 4)** Our final hypothesis was that permissive parenting would have a negative relationship with GPA and homework. This was not supported because no relationship was detected **(Figures 5 and 6)**.

Our results are consistent with other studies by Myers and Scott (2). Myers and Scott found that the authoritative parenting style had little to no effect on academic achievement (2). Our study found that authoritative parenting had no effect on GPA and homework. These studies support the idea that authoritative parenting had no effect academically at The Neighborhood Academy. We were surprised by the results because Authoritative parenting is emotionally responsive. Emotionally responsive parents should help their children, but it doesn't seem to be that way in the results. Since The Neighborhood Academy has longer school hours, students mainly do their homework at school, so parents don't really need to be of assistance once school is out.

There are many studies on authoritative parenting and how it affects children; we agreed that authoritative parenting would be effective because of the flexibility it has. However, at The



Neighborhood Academy, it was not so effective; it did not affect homework or GPA. It could be that at The Neighborhood Academy, the school days are very extended, so that the parents don't have to be so involved because their children are already taken care of. Also, with authoritative parenting, the parent just wants the child to have good grades, so if the child already has good grades, there would be no reason for the parent to watch for their child's grades.

Our results on authoritarian parenting were the opposite of Myers's and Scott's results (2). Our results revealed that Authoritarian parenting doesn't improve homework or GPA; it actually makes it worse. Scott and Myers's results were that authoritarian parenting improved students' GPA and overall grades. Other studies that we researched showed that authoritarian parenting was also bad. We think Scott and Myers's study results could be different because of the different generation in which their study was taken in. The students in that survey participated before COVID-19. This generation could possibly respond better to gentle parenting rather than more aggressive and hands-on parenting. Additionally, like other studies, we find permissive parenting is not a good thing, and generally, a parenting style not used at all in this sample.

Our study had multiple limitations. The first limitation was the number of people; it was hard to prove whether or not all the parenting styles were truly effective due to the smaller number of students (54 students), although this was because it is a small school. Another limitation was the primary ethnicity at TNA (African American). Since TNA is primarily African American, there was a lack of diversity in our study. This lack of diversity might mean we have a whole bunch of people who parent the same way. So, we can't really see much of a difference in our study. Our suggestion is to try a bigger, more diverse school. A future improvement could be trying to do the whole school, including middle school. This could definitely change the result because of the generational and age differences. Some parents may be stricter with the younger-aged children, or they might be less strict because they are so young.

According to our research, parents should adapt to trying an Authoritative parenting style with this current generation. It seems to be the only parenting style that was somewhat effective in improving grades in the overall body of research on parenting style. Authoritative parenting is considered a flexible type of parenting, which is both responsive and hands-on. It is both caring about your child's grade and letting them make their own decisions to get on the correct path. As a result, we agree with the overall conclusion made by other researchers that authoritative parenting should be encouraged (1).

## Works Cited

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