

Effects of Parenting Style on Children Development

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Malaysia is a developing country and government's urbanization policy in 1980s has encouraged migration of rural population to urban centres, consistent with the shift of economy orientation from agriculture base to industrial base. At present about 60% Malaysian live in urban areas. Live demands and labour shortage in industrial sector have forced mothers to join labour force. At present there are about 65% mothers with children below 15 years of age working full-time outside homes. Issues related to parenting and children's development becomes crucial especially in examination oriented society like Malaysia. Using 200 families as sample this study attempted to examine effects of parenting styles of dual-earner families on children behaviour and school achievement. Results of the study indicates that for mothers and fathers authoritative style have positive effects on children behaviour and school achievement. In contrast, the permissive and authoritarian styles have negative effects on children behaviour and school achievement. Effects of findings on children development are discussed.

1. Introduction

Research interest in family processes and their relation to children behavior and school achievement has been active in the past few decades. In recent years, due to demographic changes in the family as more mothers have to come to participate in the workplace, research on children's school achievement has been extended to examine the relation between children behavior, school achievement and parenting style (Barnett, 1999; Lachman & Boone-James, 1997; Lerner, 1994). In addition, researchers who have examined the relationship of work conditions such as work hours, work schedule, job demands, job supervision and job promotion have generally found some significant associations with maternal or parental feelings of role conflict, her parenting style and parental participation on children's school work (Allen et al. 2000; Heymann, 2000). The multiple effects of work conditions on families' well-being have also shown positive association with children's school achievement especially among lower income children (Miller, 2002; Huston et al., 2001; Gottfried, Gottfried & Bathurst, 1988). However, the relation is considered to be indirect because research has not been able to demonstrate that maternal employment per se is linked to low or high level of children's intellectual and cognitive development (Lerner, 1994; Gottfried, Gottfried & Bathurst, 1995). Maternal work conditions was expected to affect children's development indirectly through its effect on parenting styles or other

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aspects of family processes (Gottfried, Gottfried & Bathurst, 1995; Foster & Kalil, 2005). Similar development also occurred in Malaysia. At present about 60% Malaysian live in urban areas as result of urbanization and industrialization processes started since 1980s. There are about 64% Malaysian mothers working full-time outside home nowadays. At the same time demand from family especially children and their development aspects are high. Only middle-class and high-class families can afford to employ full-time maid at home. The low-class families in a way have to find their own strategies to solve their problems. In lower income families, mothers have to work full-time because their income are fully needed to contribute the overall family income due to the high cost of living in urban areas. Demands from children are high too because Malaysia is an examination oriented society and many parents aspire their children's school achievement to be excellent. This research focused on the effects of parenting styles employed by parents on children behavior in classroom and their achievement.

2. Review of Literature

2.1 Proximal Home Development Theory

The proximal home environment model is suggested by Gottfried & Gottfried (1984, 1988, 1995). Gottfried (1995) suggests, "proximal home environment comprises the cognitive, social-emotional and physical formulation available to children in their family relationship (p. 141). The formulation of this model is based on Gottfried and colleagues' critique of earlier research findings on the effects of maternal employment on child development in the 1960s and 1970s. Among the major criticisms was that much of the research was conducted based on the assumption of direct effects between parental employment and child cognitive development without recognition that effects were mediated by proximal home environment. Many of these studies were conducted using psychoanalytic approach in which mother was considered to be central importance to child's psychological development. Gottfried, Gottfried & Bathurst (1995) in their review about this issue stated that, "some extensive empirical data across research studies and review support this conclusion." (p.139). To support their model, Gottfried, Gottfried & Bathurst (1995) conducted their own longitudinal research which focused on maternal employment, family development; and children development from infancy through adolescence. The outcomes of this study support the previous studies that there is no difference in outcomes between full-time and part-time employed mothers, and the data consistently showed that maternal employment status was not significant for child's development across age, development domains and gender.

In addition, this study indicates that children of employed mothers are equivalent in their development in the cognitive, social emotional, academic, motivational, and behavioural domains from infancy through adolescence. Rather, regardless of maternal employment status, this study indicates that the proximal

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environment itself involves a variety of experiences provided and that parental involvement is related to child's development (Gottfried & Gottfried, 1988; Gottfried, Gottfried & Bathurst, 1995). Gottfried, Gottfried & Bathurst, further suggest that there are other specific aspects related to proximal home environment and they are father involvement, role satisfaction in employment and in parenting, work related issues (work-family conflict), job flexibility, employment schedules, and children's development. Following this suggestion, this study attempts to examine parental work condition (dual-earner parents), family structure and parenting style in relation to children behaviour in classroom and school achievement.

2.2 Parenting Style

The importance of family processes in child development has long been suggested by psychologists (Ogbu, 1981; Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Belsky, Steinberg & Draper, 1991). These psychologists indicate that parenting style which includes parent-child interaction, parent-child joint activities, parents' involvement in children's education are significant in socialisation and children's functioning. Kohn (1969) suggests that differences in adults' social realities have implications for child rearing practices and their parenting behaviour. He considers that conditions of life primarily in the occupational sphere are conditions which are conducive or restrictive of the expression of self-direction in work. Thus, different work conditions produce different outcomes among parents. There are three ways in which white-collar occupational workers differ from blue-collar occupational workers : (1) white-collar occupations typically require the individual to deal more with the manipulation of ideas, symbols and interpersonal realities whereas blue-collar occupations deal with the manipulation of physical objects and require less interpersonal skill, (ii). White-collar occupations involve work that is more complex, related to problem-solving, thought, judgement, and requires greater flexibility, while individuals in blue-collar occupation are more subject to standardisation of work, (iii) the degree of closeness of supervision is less in white-collar than in blue-collar occupations.

These differences in turn yield different results in the value orientation of white-collar and blue-collar workers : white-collar workers are more likely to enunciate values dealing with self-direction such as freedom, individualisation, initiative, creativity and self-actualisation, while blue-collar workers are more likely to stress to conformity to external standards such as orderliness, neatness, and obedience (Gecas & Nye, 1974; Kohn, 1969). In addition, these researchers suggested that class-related differences in parenting values and behaviour reflect the distillation of parents' own experiences, importantly experiences based on the nature of the work they typically perform and the social competencies required to perform their job satisfactorily, suggesting that parents' job experiences shape the way they raise their children. Following Kohn's and colleagues research on specific effects of work that have developmental effect on adults' personality and cognitive functioning, several other researchers have taken initiative to examine the effect

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of job dimensions such as job complexity and job autonomy or self-direction on parenting style (Mortimer & Lorence, 1979; Mortimer & Borman, 1988; Mortimer, Lorence & Kumka, 1986). In the beginning many of these studies were concerned more with examining relations between the nature of parental work and parenting values than with the links between parental work and parenting practices. This imbalance has been corrected by a small number of studies in late 1980s and early 1990s such as those by Parcel & Menaghan (1990), Roger, Parcel & Menaghan (1991), Repetti (1992, 1994), and O'Neill (1991). Parcel and Menaghan (1990) and Roger, Parcel & Menaghan (1991) reported significant correlation between job complexity of mothers work and composite measures of parenting behaviour such as cognitive stimulation and maternal warmth. Similarly, more substantively complex job conditions have been linked to self-valuing, more self-directed qualities in one's children and in turn to encouraging to be more autonomous and flexible (Gottfried, Gottfried & Bathurst, 1988; Schooler, 1987). Greenberger, O'Neil & Nagel (1994) support this finding and suggest that adults whose work is characterised by such positive features are more satisfied with their job experience, report less distress, and had positive parent-child interactions (Goldberg & Easterbrook, 1988; Greenberger & Goldberg, 1989). Work challenges exhibited both direct (positive) effect on the quality of parents' explanation to their children and indirect (positive) effect on the broad dimension of parenting. In contrast, poor job conditions such as busy day, high work load, higher job demands (e.g time pressure and performance expectations) are related to poor parenting behaviour. Repetti (1992, 1994) reports that fluctuations in job stressors experienced by male air traffic controllers related to father's withdrawal (e.g. fewer high involvement interactions, less monitoring of children's school work) and less effort to help children with their work. In another study of mothers with a variety of occupational status background, heavy workloads are significantly related to less involvement and more withdrawal from children (Repetti, 1991; O'Neil, 1991).

The impact of parenting style on children's school achievement can be discussed by analysing the effects of each type of parenting style. Parenting style represent a constellation of parental attitudes, practices and nonverbal expressions that characterise the nature of parent-child-interaction across diverse situations (Darling & Steinberg, 1993). Most research on parenting style derives from Baumrind's (1966, 1967, 1971 b) well-known research of children and their families. Baumrind's conceptualisation of parenting style is based on a typological approach to the study of family in relation to parenting style. The typological approach focuses on the configuration of different parenting practices and assumes that the impact of any one practice depends in part, on the arrangement of all others; some important variations in the configuration of parenting element (warmth, involvement, maturity demands, and supervision) produce variations in how the child responds to parental influence. From this perspective, parenting style is viewed as a characteristic of parents that alters the effectiveness of family socialisation practices and the child's receptiveness to such practices (Darling & Steinberg, 1993)

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Baumrind (1967) identifies three qualitatively different patterns of parenting styles: authoritarian, permissive, authoritative. Subsequently, Maccoby & Martin (1983) transformed this typology by categorising families according to their level of demandingness (control, supervision, maturity demands) and responsiveness (warmth, acceptance, involvement). "The extended parenting style typology distinguishes between non-demanding families that vary in their level of responsiveness. Parents characterised by low demandingness and high responsiveness engage in an indulgent style of parenting. These parents are tolerant, warm, and accepting. Yet, they exercise little authority, make few demands for mature behavior, and allow considerable self-regulation by the child or adolescent. By contrast, parents who are neither demanding nor responsive display a neglectful or uninvolved pattern of parenting. These parents do not monitor their children's behavior or support their interests. Whereas indulgent parents are committed to their children, neglectful parents, often preoccupied with their own problems, are disengaged from parental responsibilities" (p.508). In all, both neglectful and indulgent styles leave children or adolescent in confusion, lacking guidance, or lack of role model and perhaps lacking of direction in life.

Glasgow et al. (1997) also made a summary about parenting typology that distinguishes between demanding families that vary in their level of responsiveness. "Authoritarian parent are highly demanding and unresponsive. These parents attempt to mold and control the behavior and attitudes of their children according to a set of standards. They tend to emphasise obedience, respect for authority, and order. Authoritarian parents also discourage verbal give-and-take with children, expecting rules to be followed without further explanation" (p.508). The impact of this parenting behaviour on children's development has been documented in many studies. Poor parenting style characterised as rejecting, avoidant, withdrawal, lower-tolerance, coercive and punitive predict children's behaviour problems such as anti-social, external disorder, immaturity, anxiety, withdrawal and drug abuse (Patterson, 1983; Capaldi, Crosby & Stoolmiller, 1996; Capaldi & Patterson, 1991). In addition, research studies indicate that poor parenting practices are also related to lower school achievement : lack of parental control, and excessive levels of parental control may both lead to improper social attitudes and behaviour ranging from truancy to drug abuse and lower school achievement suggesting that harsh and indulgent parenting styles may result in children becoming anti-social, aggressive and developing a maladaptive style of processing social information (Rumberger et al., 1990; Weiss et al. 1992). Studies report show that children from authoritarian families get into less trouble than children from permissive or uninvolved parents. Number of children from authoritarian families involved in drug and alcohol use, risky behaviour like driving car without a seat belt, disruptive and aggressive are less as compared to children from permissive families (Ginsburg et al 2004; Lamborn et al. 1991, Sternberg et al, 1996; Sternberg et al. 2006). However, consistent research reports indicate that children from authoritarian families may not be as well-behaved as children from

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authoritative families. It seems that children from authoritarian families do not fully internalise the discipline aspects deployed by their parents (Querido et al. 2002; Underwood et al. 2009). Further, adolescents with authoritarian parents were the least likely to feel socially accepted by their peers and they are also rated as less self-reliant (Lamborn et al. 1991; Steinberg et al. 1994), less resourceful (Turkel & Tzer, 2008), low competence (Martinez et al. 2007; Garcia & Garcia, 2009), less helpful and less popular (Dekovic & Janssens, 1992; Janssens & Dekovic, 1997); have low self-esteem and experience depersonalization (Martinez & Garcia, 2007; Woldradt et al. 2003). It seems that children from authoritarian families simply follow rules set up by their parents, but when their parents figures are not available they do not know how to react or give responses to the new environment, such as in classroom.

The third style of parenting as suggested by Baumrind (1971) is authoritative style and this is found to be the most effective parenting style in relation to school achievement. "Authoritative parenting style maintains an effective balance between high levels of demandingness and responsiveness. These parents establish and firmly enforce rules and standards for their children's behaviour. They consistently monitor conduct and use non-punitive method or discipline when rules are violated. Socially responsible mature behaviour is expected and reinforced. Authoritative parents are also warm and supportive. They encourage bidirectional communication, validate the child's individual point of view, and recognise the rights of both parents and children" (Glasgow et al., 1997, p.508). The warm and affectionate relationship between children and parents foster cognitive growth in children (Maccoby & Martin, 1983; Baumrind, 1973, 1979). The influence of authoritative parenting also does not diminish during adolescence, adolescents who are reared in an authoritative environment "consistently score higher on measures of psychological competence and school achievement and lower on measures of internal distress, problem behaviour, than do adolescents from non-authoritative families" (Glasgow et al., 1997, p.508). Authoritative parenting style therefore create warm, loving and mutual understanding in the family and foster stable children's behaviour and personality. Glasgow et al. (1997), further in their summary indicate that, "Although there are ethnic and cultural variations in the impact of parenting style (e.g. Asian-American from authoritarian families score higher than non authoritarian) this empirical pattern appears to transcend gender, family structure, age and social class divisions" (p.508). Chao (2001) has argued that the Chinese version of authoritarian parenting is fundamentally different. Unlike Western authoritarian parents, Chinese authoritarian parents have closer relationships to their children, and closeness is a predictor of higher school achievement.

The most disadvantaged children are those who are reared by neglectful parents. They show the lowest level of adjustment among the three types of parenting. At adolescence levels, "these adolescents are the most disadvantaged with respect to measures of social competence, academic achievement, and psychological

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adjustment” (Glasgow et al., 1997, p.508). Although research studies have shown significant relationships between work, parenting style and school achievement, these relationships are moderated by three factors : parental education attainment, occupational status, family income. McLoyd (1990) who reviewed the impact of economic hardship on African-American families and children concluded that poverty, economic hardship and lower-class status are related to poor parenting style, child abuse among parents and less confidence, low self-esteem and physical unattractiveness among children. The economic and emotional distress experienced by lower-class parents cause them to be less supportive and less sensitive. These parents use power assertive techniques in disciplinary encounters, value obedience more, are less likely to use reasoning and more likely to use physical punishment as means of controlling the child (Laosa, 1908; Felner et al., 1995). Engle (1991) found that social and economic disadvantage affect the way parents shape proximal development experiences and mental development of adolescents. This study indicates that there are two major factors affecting the proximal environmental experience : parents’ educational attainment and occupational status. Adolescents from homes in which adults were employed in low-income unskilled occupations were found to have lower levels of achievement than those from homes in which adults were in higher paying occupations (Kalmijn, 1995; MacLeod, 1987). Studies on the relation between parenting behaviour and children’s school achievement conducted in a cross national study in Thailand (Intasuwan, 1985), Indonesia (Din and Achir, 1978), India (Jain and Mishra, 1994), China (Chen et al.1997), and Taiwan (Pong et al. 2010) revealed the same outcomes.

Parenting style provide a robust indicator of parenting functioning that predicts child well-being across a wide spectrum of environments and across diverse communities of children. Both parental responsiveness and parental demandingness are important components of good parenting. Authoritative parenting, which balances clear, high parental demands with emotional responsiveness and recognition of child autonomy, is one of the most consistent family predictors of competence from early childhood through adolescence. The outcomes of each parenting style on child development are consistent in many different environment throughout of the world (i.e Chen et al. 1997; Pong et al. 2010; Jain & Mishra, 1994). The present study highlights two major questions: (i) Do parenting styles differ across mothers and fathers and gender (male/female) of target children, and (ii) Do parenting styles affect children behaviour and school achievement? Similar to the previous studies on parenting styles, the present study predicts that both mothers and fathers employ better parenting style (authoritative) to their daughters as compare to their sons. Furthermore, all variables tested in the study affects children behaviour and school achievement: positively and negatively.

3. Methodology

3.1 Sample of the Study

This study involved 200 intact families which comprised 200 full-time working mothers and 200 full-time working fathers. The study's sample comprised 200 Malay families, 200 children and 45 class teachers. The study only focused on Malay dual earners families because majority of them are new in the urban environment as compared another major ethnic in urban Malaysia, the Chinese group. This is the major limitation of this study. Moreover, the study only involved 200 Malay families as sample and only selected from one state out of 14 states in Malaysia. However, the state chosen was appropriate because it reflects the Malaysian society as a whole : comprises three major ethnics, Malay, Chinese and Indian. Future research is recommended using bigger sample focused on comparison between ethnics such as between Malay and Chinese families. Sample background for this study is divided into four parts : family background, fathers' and mothers' background, children's background and teachers' background. Sample of this study is selected using stratified random selection procedure based on four criteria: (i) mother and father of each family are working full-time, (ii) each family has at least two children, one of them is the target child for the research, (iii) families are chosen from two lower- and middle class background, and (iv) children sample are divided into two groups : 50 % male and 50% female. Sample size with 200 families (comprises mothers, fathers and children) is appropriate for the data analysis approach employ for this study.

3.2 Family Demographic Background

Of the 200 families, 90.5 per cent (181) had nuclear family background and only 9.5 per cent (19) had extended family background. It seemed that some elderly parents of Malay families still live in the rural areas and refused to follow their children to the urban centres. Overall, percentage of nuclear family for the sample was higher than the national percentage that was 68 per cent (Malaysia, 2004) The mean of number of children per family in this study is 3.9, about 31.5 per cent (63) of families had 4 children, 21 per cent (42) had three, 15.5 per cent (31) had 2 children and 10.5 per cent (21) had had more than 7 children. For the purpose of this study, only families with more than one children were selected as sample. Of the 200 families in the sample, 5 per cent (10) had monthly income of RM1600 or less and the balance of that number (95 per cent = 190) were families with monthly income between RM 1601-RM6000. Overall, many families had income between RM2500- RM6000. With that income about 47 per cent of families had live in maid or family helper.

3.3 Mothers

There were 200 working mothers and fathers in the study. Mean of mother's age in the study was 39 years and had various educational and occupational

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background. About 45% (90) of mothers completed 9 years of education (lower secondary level), 24.5% (49) completed secondary level (SPM= Year 11) and only 15% (30) received tertiary education at diploma and degree levels. With the secondary school education background, many of the mothers secured job as production operator in the factories, 32.5% (65), the lowest job status in the given ranking. The rest of them work in other fields: repairs (16.5% = 33), administration support (12% = 24) and semi-professional (14% = 28). Most mothers work 44 hours per week and only 16.5%(33) had non-day working shift.

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Table 1 : Mean, Standard Deviations and Ranges for Demographic Variables (Mothers)

Variables	Mean	SD	Ranges
Mothers n=200			
Age of mothers	39	.82	29-49 years
Mothers' educational attainment Below Form3=38% (76) Completed Form 3=21%(43) Completed Form 5=30%(60) Completed Form 6=5%(10) 2-3 years diploma=3%(6) BA/BS= 2.5%(5)	2.5 (between Year 9-Year 11)	1.3	Below Year 9– Bachelor degree Same
Mothers' occupational status Professional = 2.5%(5) Professional junior=13.5%(27) Semi professional=14%(28) Marketing promoter, sales=18%(28) Administration support=12%(24) Mechanic and repair=16.5%(33) Production operator=32.5%(65)	4.9 (semi professional)	1.9 1.96	Production operator to professional
Mothers' monthly income Less than RM500=15.5% RM500-RM1000=45%(90) RM1000-RM1500=24.5%(49) RM500-RM2000=10%(20) RM2000-RM2500=2.5%(5) RM2500 and above=2.5%(5)	RM1250	1.44	RM500- RM3000
Mothers' work hours (weekly)	42 47	.86 .83	30-49 hours 30-49 hours
Mothers' work temp Non-day shift = 16.5% (33) No shift =83.5% Father's work tempo Non-day shift = 16.4% (33) No Shift = 83.5% (167)	1.83 1.83	.37 .37	

3.4 Fathers

Malay fathers in the sample had age slightly older than wives, mean of the fathers age was 40. Overall fathers had better education than mothers, 31.5 % (63) of them received diploma and degree levels, 45%(90) completed lower secondary, and 21% (42) completed secondary education. With such education background, about 25.5% (51) of them worked as production operator, 16% (32)

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as mechanic and repairers, 14.5% (19) as administration supports and 10.5% as marketing and sales officers. Only 33.5% (67) working as semi-professional staff and professional executives. Overall, mean of the fathers' income was between RM1500-RM2000. Range of income for fathers was quite high between RM 550 (per month) to RM2500 (per month). There were about 10.5% (21) of fathers received monthly salary around RM500. The mean of working hours for fathers was 47 hours per week, slightly higher than mothers, which was 42 hours. Similar to mothers, about 16.5% (33) of fathers had non-day working shift.

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Table 2 : Mean, Standard Deviations and ranges for Demographic Variables (Fathers)

Variables	Mean	SD	Ranges
Fathers n=2000			
Age of fathers	40	1.1	30-49 years
Fathers' educational attainment Below Form3=11.5%(23) Completed Form 3=16.5%(33) Completed Form 5=39%(78) Completed Form 6=9.5%(19) 2-3 years diploma=7.5%(15) BA/BS= 16(32)	3.3 (between Form 5-Form6)	1.3	Below Year 9– Bachelor degree Same
Fathers' occupational status Professional = 3%(6) Profession junior=19.5%(39) Semi professional=11%(22) Marketing promoter, sales=10.5%(21) Administration support=14.5%(19) Mechanic and repair=16%(32) Production operator=25.5%(51)	4.6 (semi professional)	1.9 1.96	Production operator to professional
Fathers' monthly income Less than RM500=2.5%(5) RM500-RM1000=45%(90) RM1000-RM1500=21%(42) RM500-RM2000=21.5%(43) RM2000-RM2500=2%(4) RM2500 and above=8%(16)	RM1500	1.3	RM500- RM3000
Fathers' work hours (weekly)	47	.83	30-49 hours
Fathers' work tempo Non-day shift = 16.5% (33) No shift =83.5%	1.83	.37	
Father's work tempo Non-day shift = 16.4% (33) No Shift = 83.5% (167)	1.83	.37	

3.5 Children

There were altogether 200 children in the study, 50 per cent (100) of them were males and 50% were females. About 29.5% (59) of the children were 7 years of age, 34.5 % (69) 8 years, and 36% (72) were nine years. Because children's age go consistently with class in school, about 29.5 per cent (59) of the children were in Grade 1, 30 per cent (60) in Grade 2 and 38% (76) in Grade 3. Children's

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background was provided with their school achievement based on their major subjects : Reading (Mean =80.4 %, SD= 15.37), Malay Language (Mean 80.70 per cent, SD = 16.30) and Mathematics (Mean 77.20%, SD= 19.56). All three subjects' scores were based on mean of four times classroom tests developed by school teachers based on School Based Test Format.

3.6 Teachers

The present study examined relationships between parents' work conditions, parenting styles and children's school achievement. The study therefore involved school and teachers. Children of this study were selected from 15 primary schools in Seremban, the state capital of Negeri Sembilan. There were 45 teachers involved in the study. Their roles were helping researcher to gather children's information, distributing research's questionnaire and giving children assessment based on three compulsory subjects in the Malaysian primary school curriculum : Malay Language, Mathematics, Reading. Out of 45 teachers selected, 25 were females and 20 were males and had mean of age of 40 years. Most of them had teaching experience more than 10 years and graduated from Teachers Training College in Malaysia.

3.7 Research's Instruments

There were eleven types of measures used in the study taken or adapted from previous researchers. All measures were tested again at the first stage of the study in the pilot study using 80 families. Sample for the pilot study involved 80 families and they were not included in the main study. Overall the cronbach alpha coefficients of all measures were between 0.65 to 0.85 : Work Conditions comprises three parts taken or adapted from Smith, Kendall and Hulin (1969) and modified by Roznowski (1980) = Job Demand 0.85; Job Supervision 0.81, Job Promotion 0.85; Parenting Styles taken or adapted from Lamborn et al (1991) = Authoritarian 0.65, Permissive 0.62, Authoritative 0.68; Parental Monitoring adapted from Block (1965) and Milne et al.(1986) = 0.81; and Children's Behaviour Checklist taken from Fincham, Hakoda and Sanders(1989) =0.86.

3.8 Procedures

The study was conducted following a survey method which involved parents' responses to questionnaires. Research study was conducted in one year between August 2008 to August 2009. The first step of the procedures started with school visit. Researcher and teachers identified appropriate children and families to be sample for the study (dual earner family background, had at least two children, mixed socio-economic status background). Step 2 involved researcher distributing questionnaires through school children. In some cases researcher visited families and assisted parents who were not sure how to give response. Mothers and fathers' responses were measured separately because the study aimed to investigate the differences of father and mother work

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conditions, parenting style and parental involvement on children's school achievement. While different procedures were employed with these participants, the enhanced validity of data gathered was advanced as the justification for these variations.

4. Research Findings

4.1 Differences in Parenting Styles by Parent and Target Child Sex

To determine whether parenting styles differed across mothers and fathers and sex of the target child a simple frequency and percentage were performed. In this analysis, parent (mother versus father) were compared. The distribution of means and standard deviation for scores on the Authoritarian, Authoritative and Permissive subscales by parent and child sex are shown in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1. Means (*Ms*), Standard Deviations (*SDs*), and Cell Numbers (*Ns*) for Parenting Style Variables by Parent.

Measure	Parent	Child Sex	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Authoritarian	Fathers	Male	100	23.84	6.13
		Female	100	22.55	5.19
	Mothers	Male	100	24.43	5.63
		Female	100	22.46	5.41
Authoritative	Fathers	Male	100	30.35	4.07
		Female	100	31.34	4.46
	Mothers	Male	100	30.76	4.94
		Female	100	31.24	4.53
Permissive	Fathers	Male	100	9.56	3.29
		Female	100	9.52	3.31
	Mothers	Male	100	10.14	3.80
		Female	100	9.69	3.25

Table 1.1 indicates that Malay fathers employed more authoritarian style to their boys ($m=23.84$), as compared to their daughters ($m=22.55$). Similarly, mothers also employed more authoritarian style to their sons and less authoritarian to their girls. The same effects also obvious in authoritative style. For both mothers and fathers, effects of authoritative style are higher on girls ($m=31.24$, $m=31.34$)

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as compared to boys ($m=30.35$, $m=30.76$). Effects of permissive style show consistent outcomes, both mothers and fathers are more permissive to boys ($m=9.56$, $m=10.14$), as compared to girls ($m=9.52$, $m=9.69$). In sum, both Malay mothers and fathers employed more authoritarian style to their boys, more authoritative to their girls and more permissive to their boys.

4.2 Effects on Parenting Styles

4.2.1 Effects on Mothers and Father

Table 1.2 is the correlation matrix for mothers. There are three suggested variable to affects all three types of parenting styles : child sex, socio-economic status (SES), and work conditions. SES variable is a combination of there sub-variable and they are academic attainment, job status and monthly income. All three variable had significant negative effects on authoritarian (child sex=-0.18, SES =-0.38, and work conditions=0-.36.). These results indicates that child sex affect the degree of mothers' authoritarianism, lower SES are related to higher authoritarian style and poor job conditions predict higher authoritarian among mothers. Table 1.3 illustrated the correlation of all variables in the study. For fathers authoritarian is correlated negatively to child sex (-0.18), SES (-.032) and work conditions (-0.28). The correlation are all significant, predict that there are differences in parenting style particularly authoritarian style employed by fathers to daughters and sons, higher authoritarian style is related to lower SES and also lower job conditions.

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Table 1.2 : Correlation Matrix for Mothers

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Child Sex	1							
2. SES	-0.05	1						
3. Work Conditions	0.12	0.35	1					
4. Authoritarian	-0.18	-0.38	-0.36	1				
5. Permissive	-0.06	-0.11	-0.20	0.24	1			
6. Authoritative	0.05	0.31	0.23	-0.42	-0.23	1		
7. School Achievement	0.22	0.40	0.44	-0.50	-0.07	0.40	1	
8. Children Behaviour	0.21	0.24	0.37	-0.32	-0.03	0.24	0.61	1.00

Table 1.3 : Correlation Matrix for Fathers

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Child Sex	1							
2. SES	-0.05	1.00						
3. Work Conditions	0.10	0.34	1.00					
4. Authoritarian	-0.11	-0.32	-0.28	1.00				
5. Permissive	-0.01	-0.14	-0.28	0.30	1.00			
6. Authoritative	0.12	0.13	0.29	-0.45	-0.27	1.00		
7. School Achievement	0.22	0.40	-0.26	-0.47	-0.17	0.36	1.00	
8. Children Behaviour	0.21	0.24	0.18	-0.32	-0.15	0.23	0.61	1.00

4.2.2. Effects on Children Behavior and School Achievement

Mothers

Effects of all variables on children behavior and school achievement are illustrated in Table 1.3 for mothers. For mothers, children behavior is determined by their sex 0.21, SES 0.24, work conditions 0.37, authoritarian -0.32, permissive -0.03, and authoritative 0.24. In all, mothers' work conditions has strong correlation with children behavior, indicates that better work conditions predicted positive children behavior. The authoritative style also has significant correlation with children behavior indicating that authoritative style encourages children to be confident in classroom or have strong learned mastery behavior.

For mothers, children school achievement has significant correlation with their sex or gender 0.22, SES 0.40, work conditions 0.37, authoritative 0.40, authoritarian -0.32, and permissive -0.03. Mothers' SES background and authoritative style and works conditions appeared to be three major determinants of children behavior. On the other hand, authoritarian style also plays significant role to determine children behavior, but it is negative one, indicating higher degree of authoritarianism affects children behavior negatively or in particular higher level of learned helpless behavior. In all both children behavior and school achievement are positively influenced by child sex, SES, authoritative and negatively by mothers authoritarian style.

Fathers

Effects of all variable on children behavior and school achievement is illustrated in Table 1.3. For Malay fathers, children behavior is influenced by child sex 0.21, SES 0.24, work conditions 0.18, authoritarian -0.32, permissive -0.15, authoritative 0.23 and similar to mothers, children behavior has strongest effect on achievement, 0.61.. The correlation between suggested variables with children behavior are significant and most obvious one is authoritarian which is negative -0.32 indicating higher authoritarian style affect children behavior negatively. Fathers' effect of authoritarian on children behavior is similar with mothers' effects. Effects of permissive style of fathers' on children behaviour (-0.15) is higher than mothers' effects (-0.03), indicating that more fathers employed permissive style as compared to mothers.

Children's school achievement is influenced by all suggested factors but different in value. Strongest one is children behavior 0.61, authoritarian -0.47 followed by SES 0.40, authoritative 0.36, fathers' work conditions 0.26 and permissive -0.17. Effects of authoritarian, SES and permissive are higher than mothers' effects on the same variables indicating that effects of fathers' authoritarian and SES are stronger than mothers' and similar phenomenon also obvious on effects on children behavior. Effects of fathers' permissiveness on school achievement is also higher.

5. Discussion

Parenting styles is all about how to raise children. It includes biological, emotional, spiritual and social support by parents. The long-term outcomes of parenting style are actually results of parents aspiration on idealism of socialization aims determined by parents. In general it could be that many parents have high aspiration on their children, wanting everything good happen to them but other factors also influenced the way they make themselves responsible or irresponsible such as cultural factor and SES. The present research shows that both mothers and fathers employed authoritative style stronger to daughters and lower to their sons and at the same time employed more authoritarian style to their boys and less authoritarian to their daughters. Both mothers and fathers do not realize that in a way they are giving better attention to their daughters as compared to their sons. The same phenomenon also found by other researchers (e.g Hoffman, 1976, 1988, Gottfried, Gottfried & Bathurst, 1988). Working mothers give more attention to their girls rather than boys. Mothers also spending time more with girls than boys when not working. It seems that parents especially mothers try to compensate missing hour when working more with girls than boys. For better long-term outcomes, parents should give equal attention to all children regardless their gender.

Parenting styles are determined by parents' SES background, working conditions and child sex. More educated and parents who belong to middle-

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class background employed better and effective parenting style or authoritative style. In contrast, less educated parents or lower-income parents employed harsh or authoritarian style stronger to their children as compared to more advantaged children who come from better family and home background. Similar finding are recorded by other researchers (eg. McLoyd 1990, Menaghan & Bathurst 1990; Foster & Kalil 2005); and Lareau 1989). Poor work conditions such as busy day, high work load, higher job demands (e.g time pressure and performance expectations) are related to poor parenting behaviour. For example, Repetti (1992, 1994) reports that fluctuations in job stressors experienced by male air traffic controllers related to father's withdrawal (e.g. fewer high involvement interactions, less monitoring of children's school work) and less effort to help children with their work. Heavy workloads by mothers are significantly related to less involvement and more withdrawal from children (Repetti, 1991; O'Neil, 1991). Although this behaviour may be an adaptive response to allow parents who experience stress as result of job conditions to regain their normal level of emotional and psychological functioning, stressful conditions of work may prompt withdrawal, hostile or punitive parent-child interactions (Hoffman, 1984; Bolger , de Longis, Kessler, and Wethington, 1989; Lerner and Galambos, 1985).

Direct effects of parenting styles on children behavior and school achievement are clearly shown in the present study. Two types of parenting styles that appeared to be significant in relation to children behavior and school achievement are authoritarian and authoritative. Mothers' and fathers' effects are quite similar, positive effects for authoritative and negative effects for authoritarian. However, effects of fathers' authoritarian style are stronger than mothers' on both children behavior and school achievement indicating that fathers' overall are more authoritarian than mothers. Different emphasis on child sex in terms of parenting styles given different outcomes to children behavior and school achievement among children in the study. Since girls are given better attention through better parenting style (authoritative), they performed better in classroom than boys. Whether parents realize or not about this trend this issue needs to be investigated when looking at the reasons why girls performed better in public examinations in Malaysia and girls later on becomes majority in the entire public universities in Malaysia. Overall the present research findings on effects of parenting styles on children behavior and school achievement are similar to other findings conducted elsewhere in the world as discussed.

6. Conclusion

The present research study emphasizes its scope on effects of parenting styles of working parents on children development. Two aspects of development investigated are children behavior and cognitive development or school achievement. Three types of parenting styles tested are based on Baumrind's (1967) parenting styles' typology : authoritarian, authoritative and permissive. In general fathers and mothers employed better parenting style (authoritative) to

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girls as compared to boys. Fathers and mothers also are found to be more authoritarian to their boys. Similar to other research conducted in other countries such as America and Europe, authoritarian style gives negative effects on children behavior to and school achievement and on the other hand, authoritative style gives positive effects on children development. Since girls are given better attention by both mothers and fathers, they behave well in classroom and have higher or better achievement.

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