

Table 5.8 Average Total Percentage Scores for the KIDI-P (N=140)

Scores attained	Correct	Incorrect	Not sure
Overall	60.98%	27.99%	11.00%
Principles	58.95%	25.05%	16.00%
Parenting	67.30%	27.86%	4.84%
Health and Safety	69.71%	22.29%	8.00%
Norms and Milestones	47.95%	36.76%	15.30%

Table 5.8 presents the average total percentage scores for the entire sample (N=140) across all the subscales. It also presents the scores for the entire sample for the individual subscales. The findings show that overall the sample scored 60.98% of the questions were scored correctly on the KIDI-P. The sample scored higher in the health and safety subscales (69.71%) and parenting subscales (67.30%), indicating that the sample is fairly knowledgeable in these areas. The lowest scores were obtained in the norms and milestone subscale of which 47.95% were scored correctly.



5.6 Parenting styles

This section of the study provides descriptive statistics which addresses one of the objectives which is to determine the most prevalent parenting styles of the total sample to determine one of the objectives which is. Means (*M*) and standard Deviations (**SD**) for PSDQ of the total sample (N=140) parenting styles, are presented in Tables 5.10, 5.11 and 5.12 in order to evaluate this objective.

Table 5.10 represent the means and standard deviations for each of fifteen items for Authoritative parenting style for the total sample. It is categorised in three dimensions

separately, as Connection Dimension (warmth and control), Regulation Dimension (reasoning/induction) follows, and finally Autonomy Granting Dimension.

Table 5.10 *Means and SD of items for Authoritative Parenting Style (n=140)*

Authoritative Parenting Style		
Item	M	SD
Connection (Warmth & Support)		
...responsive to our child's feelings and needs	4.70	0.69
...encourage our child to talk about his/her feelings	4.64	0.77
...give comfort and understanding when our child is upset	4.56	0.82
...give praise when our child is good	4.71	0.69
...have warm and intimate times together with our child	4.64	0.75
Connection	4.65	0.55
Regulation (Reasoning/Induction)		
...explain to our child how we feel about the child's good and bad behaviour	4.56	0.74
...emphasize the reason for rules	4.44	0.96
...give our child reasons why rules should be obeyed	4.36	1.03
...help our child to understand the impact of behaviour by encouraging our child to talk about the consequences of his/her own actions	4.61	0.77
...explain the consequences of the child's behaviour	4.60	0.74
Autonomy Granting (Democratic Participation)		

...take our child's desires into account before asking the child to do something	4.33	1.01
...encourage our child to freely express himself/herself even when disagreeing with parents	4.31	1.09
...take into account our child's preferences in making plans for the family	4.44	0.95
...show respect for our child's opinions by encouraging our child to express them	4.60	0.81
...allow our child to give input into family rules	4.27	1.05

Responses were on a Likert scale of 1 = Never, 2 = Once in a while, 3 = About half the time, 4 = Very often, 5 = Always

The results In Table 5.10 suggest that within the Connection dimension the majority of participants ($M = 4.71$, $SD = 0.69$) perceived themselves as *[Giving] praise when their child/children were good*, followed closely by being *responsive to their child's needs* ($M = 4.70$, $SD = 0.69$)

For the Regulation Dimension (Reasoning/Induction) the means scores suggest that the majority ($M = 4.61$, $SD = 0.77$) *help their child/children to understand the impact of behaviour by encouraging our child to talk about the consequences of his/her own actions*

Furthermore for the Autonomy Granting Dimension (Democratic Participation) the scores suggest that the majority ($M = 4.60$; $SD = 0.81$) *show respect for our child's opinions by encouraging our child to express them*

Table 5.11 represents the means and standard deviations of twelve items for the Authoritarian parenting style for the total sample (N=140). It is categorized in three dimensions namely: physical coercion, verbal hostility and non-reasoning.

Table 5.11 *Means and SD of items for Authoritarian Parenting Style (n=140)*

Authoritarian Parenting Style		
Item	M	SD
Physical Coercion Dimension		
...use physical punishment as a way of disciplining our child	1.49	0.89
...spank when our child is disobedient	1.73	1.16
...grab our child when being disobedient	1.51	0.98
...slaps the child when the child misbehaves	1.32	0.78
Verbal Hostility Dimension		
...yell or shout when our child misbehaves	1.84	1.20
...explode in anger towards our child	1.49	0.92
...scolds and criticizes to make our child improve	1.73	1.09
...scolds or criticizes when our child's behaviour doesn't meet our expectations	1.69	1.11
Non-Reasoning		
When our child asks why he/she has to conform, it is stated: because I said so, or I am your parent and I want you to	2.10	1.25
...punish by taking priviledges away from our child with little if any explanations	1.85	1.22
...use threats as punishment with little or no justification	1.49	0.98
...punish by putting our child off somewhere alone with little if any explanations	1.31	0.83

Responses were on a Likert scale of 1 = Never, 2 = Once in a while, 3 = About half the time, 4 = Very often, 5 = Always

The Mean score results in Table 5.11 suggest that for the Physical Coercion dimension the majority reported that they ‘never’ ($M = 1.32$, $SD = 0.78$) “...slap the child when the child misbehaves” but ‘once in a while’ they would “...spank when our child is disobedient” ($M = 1.73$, $SD = 1.16$).

For the Verbal Hostility dimension the results indicate that the majority of participants would ‘never’ ($M = 1.49$, $SD = 0.92$) “...explode in anger towards our child” and reported that ‘once in a while’ ($M = 1.84$, $SD = 1.20$) they would “...yell or shout when our child misbehaves”.

Furthermore for the Non-Reasoning Dimension the results indicate that on average, participants would ‘never’ ($M = 1.31$, $SD = 0.83$) “...punish by putting our child off somewhere alone with little if any explanations”, however they would ‘once in a while’ ($M = 2.10$, $SD = 1.25$) “...when our child asks why he/she has to conform, it is stated: because I said so, or I am your parent and I want you to” followed by ($M = 1.85$, $SD = 1.22$) “...punish by taking priviledges away from our child with little if any explanations”.

Table 5.12 presents the means and standard deviations of five items for the Permissive parenting style for total sample. The permissive parenting style only has one dimension namely Indulgent.

Table 5.12 Means and SD of items for Permissive Parenting Style (n=140)

Permissive Parenting Style		
Item	M	SD
Indulgent Dimension		
...finds it difficult to discipline our child	1.54	1.15
...give into our child when the child causes a commotion about something	1.72	1.11
...threaten our child with punishment more often than actually giving it	1.88	1.24
...state punishments to our child and does not actually do them	1.99	1.25
...spoil our child	3.10	1.29

Responses were on a Likert scale of 1 = Never, 2 = Once in a while, 3 = About half the time, 4 = Very often, 5 = Always

The results in Table 5.12 suggest that the majority of participants (N = 140) reported that ‘about half of the time’ ($M = 3.10$, $SD = 1.29$) they would “*spoil their child/children*” followed by parenting reporting that ‘once in a while’ ($M = 1.99$, $SD 1.25$) they would “*...state punishments to our child and does not actually do them*”. However, on average participants also indicated that they hardly ($M = 1.54$, $SD = 1.15$) “*...find it difficult to discipline [their] child*”.

Table 5.13 represent the overall mean scores for the entire samples across all the subscales.

Table 5.13 Total Mean and Standard Deviation scores for the sample (n=140)

Variables	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev
CONNECT	1.00	5.00	4.65	0.55
REG	1.00	5.00	4.51	0.68
AUT	1.00	5.00	4.39	0.78
AUTIVE	1.00	5.00	4.52	0.61
PHYS	1.00	5.00	1.51	0.78
VERBH	1.00	5.00	1.69	0.91
PUNIT	1.00	5.00	1.69	0.85
AUTRIAN	1.00	5.00	1.63	0.80
PER	1.00	5.00	2.05	0.75

Table 5.13 results suggest that the most prevalent parenting style across the total sample (N = 140) is Authoritative ($M= 4.52$, $SD = 0.61$) as reported by the parents with parents encouraging autonomy ($M = 4.39$, $SD = 0.78$), regulation ($M = 4.39$, $SD = 0.78$) and connection ($M = 4.65$, $SD = 0.55$). This is followed by parents reporting permissive parenting ($M = 2.05$, $SD = 0.75$). The results also suggest that authoritarian parenting is low.

5.7 Socio-economic status

The results in this section reflect the relationship between knowledge of child development and parenting styles across the low and high socio economic status groups. It also provides information on whether the differences between the variable and the groups were significant or not.

5.7.1 Comparing knowledge of child development between low and high socio-economic groups

Table 5.14 represents a comparison of the means scores for each subscale for the high and low socio-economic group based on an independent t-test



Table 5.14 Comparing mean scores between low and high socio-economic groups

Subscale	Variable	LSES (N=59)		HSES (N= 81)		SE	t	df	p
		M	SD	M	SD				
Principles	Correct	8.37	2.36	9.23	2.12	0.38	-2.26	138.00	0.03
	Incorrect	4.44	2.18	3.31	1.88	0.34	3.28	138.00	0.00
	Don't know	2.31	2.31	2.46	2.80	0.43	-0.35	135.72	0.73
Parenting	Correct	5.61	1.62	6.38	1.22	0.25	-3.08	103.13	0.00
	Incorrect	2.80	1.64	2.30	1.21	0.25	1.99	101.57	0.05
	Don't know	0.59	1.02	0.32	0.63	0.15	1.82	89.65	0.07
Norms & Milestones	Correct	12.25	4.06	10.96	2.87	0.62	2.09	98.51	0.04
	Incorrect	9.03	3.66	8.67	4.37	0.68	0.54	135.26	0.59
	Don't know	2.71	3.41	4.37	5.42	0.75	-2.22	135.48	0.03
Health & Safety	Correct	6.93	1.50	7.00	1.08	0.23	-0.30	100.24	0.77
	Incorrect	2.37	1.10	2.10	0.89	0.17	1.58	108.72	0.12
	Don't know	0.20	0.48	0.38	0.49	0.08	-2.16	125.95	0.03

The results in Table 5.14 show that parents in the high socio-economic group (N=81) scored higher ($M = 9.23$, $SD = 2.12$) for correct responses for the Principles subscale in contrast to parents in the low socio-economic group (N = 59) [$M = 8.37$, $SD = 2.36$]. The difference was significant $t(138) = -2.26$; $p = 0.03$ which is less than .05. The results show that the low socio-economic group scored higher ($M = 4.44$, $SD = 2.18$) for incorrect responses than the high socio-economic group ($M = 3.31$, $SD = 1.88$) with the difference in mean scores being significant $t(138) = 3.28$; $p = 0.00$ which is less than .05.

For the Parenting subscale, parents in the high socio-economic group (N = 81) scored higher ($M = 6.38$, $SD = 1.22$) for correct responses when compared to parents in the low socio economic group (N= 59) [$M = 5.61$, $SD = 1.62$]. The difference in mean scores for correct responses was significant $t(103.13) = -3.08$; $p = 0.00$ which is less than .05. The results also show that the low socio-economic group scored higher ($M = 2.80$, $SD = 1.64$) for incorrect responses than the high socio-economic group ($M = 2.30$, $SD = 1.21$) with the difference in mean scores being significant $t(101.57) = 1.99$; $p = 0.05$ which is equal to .05.

There were no significant differences between the groups for correct and incorrect responses.

For the norms and milestones subscale, parents in the low socio-economic groups scored higher ($M = 12.25$, $SD = 4.06$) for correct responses when compared to parents in the high socio-economic group ($M = 10.96$, $SD = 2.87$). The difference in mean scores was significant as $t(98.51) = 2.09$; $p = 0.04$ which is less than .05. There were no significant differences between the groups for incorrect responses.

The results in Table 5.14 indicate that the majority of the questions were answered correctly by both the high and low socio-economic groups. However, parents in the high socio-economic group were more knowledgeable than the low socio-economic group particularly in the principles, and parenting subscales with the knowledge level being significantly higher

than the parents in the low socio-economic group. While both groups scored higher for correct responses in the health and safety subscale, the difference in scores was not significant indicating that the knowledge level was similar. However, for the norms and milestones subscale, the parents in the low socio economic group scored higher than the parents in the high socio-economic group with the difference in knowledge level being significant. The parents in the low socio-economic group scored more correct responses (across all the subscales) than incorrect responses. However, they also scored higher for incorrect responses (across all the subscales) than the parents in the high socio-economic group. The differences in mean scores for incorrect responses were also significant for the principles and parenting subscales.

5.7.2 Comparing parenting styles between low and high socio-economic group

Table 5.16 represent a comparison of mean scores for parenting styles between the low and high socio economic group



Table 5.16 Comparing mean scores for parenting styles between low and high socio-economic groups

	LSES (<i>N</i> =59)		HSES (<i>N</i> = 81)					
Subscale	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
AUTIVE	4.32	0.64	4.66	0.54	0.10	-3.39	138.00	0.00
AUTRIAN	1.93	0.93	1.41	0.60	0.14	3.72	92.27	0.00
PERM	2.31	0.89	1.86	0.56	0.13	3.41	91.10	0.00

The results in Table 5.16 show that parents' perceptions of their parenting styles were significantly different. For authoritative parenting, parents in the high socio-economic groups ($M = 4.66, SD = 0.54$) perceived themselves to be more authoritative than parents in the low

socio-economic group ($M = 4.32, SD = 0.64$). The difference in mean scores were significantly negative $t(138) = -3.39; p = 0.00$ which is less than 0.05. For authoritarian and permissive parenting, parents in low socio-economic groups were more authoritarian ($M = 1.93, SD = 0.93$) and permissive ($M = 2.31, SD = 0.89$) than parents in high socio-economic groups for authoritarian ($M = 1.41, SD = 0.60$) and permissive ($M = 1.86, SD = 0.56$) parenting. This was significantly different for authoritarian $t(138) = 3.72; p = 0.00$ which is less than 0.05. and permissive parenting style $t(138) = 3.41; p = 0.00$ which is less than 0.05.

5.7.3 Determining associational aspects of the variables of the study

This section reports on the correlation scores for knowledge and child development and parenting styles



Table 5.17 Correlation scores for KIDI-P and PSDQ between low and high socio-economic groups

Variable	Autive			Autrian			Perm		
	Total Sample	Low SES	High SES	Total Sample	Low SES	High SES	Total Sample	Low SES	High SES
PrincCorr	.11	.12	.01	-.11	-.09	-.01	.20*	-.21	-.07
PrincInc	-.00	.15	.01	.09	.02	-.00	.81	.04	-.05
PrincDK	-.08	-.21	-.01	.05	.11	.01	.13	.21	.09
ParentCorr	.16	.16	.01	-.30**	-.41**	.02	-.30**	-.41**	.02
ParentIncor	-.07	-.07	.02	.19*	.28**	-.04	.15	.20	-.04
ParentDK	-.15	-.15	-.06	.19*	.21	.04	.26*	.32*	.05
NMCorr	.03	.19	-.04	-.05	-.24	.09	-.09	-.18	-.11
NMIncor	.02	.02	.05	-.04	-.05	-.07	-.04	-.12	-.00
NMDK	-.04	-.24	-.01	.07	.34**	.01	.11	.35**	.06
HSCorr	.04	.03	.05	.02	.10	-.07	-.06	-.04	-.07
HSIncor	.06	.20	.01	-.04	-.18	.03	-.02	-.11	-.01
HSDK	.02	-.11	-.45	-.04	-.02	.06	-.02	.03	.04

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The results in Table 5.17 show that there is no relationship between knowledge of child development across all the subscales and authoritative parenting. However there is a significantly negative correlation between authoritarian parenting and correct responses for the parenting subscale of the KIDI-P ($r = -.30^{**}$) for the total sample and the low socio

economic group ($r = -.30^{**}$). This indicates that if correct responses increase for the parenting subscales, there may be less association with authoritarian parenting. Furthermore the results also show that there is a positive correlation between incorrect responses for the parenting subscale and authoritarian parenting for the total sample ($r = .19^*$) and the low socio-economic group ($r = .28^{**}$). Thus the higher the incorrect responses for the parenting subscale there may be an increase in authoritarian parenting. There is also a correlation between authoritarian parenting and the norms and milestones subscale for “don’t know” responses for the low socio-economic group ($r = .34^{**}$) indicating that the higher the score for “don’t know” responses then there is a likelihood that the participants may be authoritarian in their parenting.

The results show that there is a correlation between permissive parenting and correct responses for the principles subscales for the total sample ($r = .20^*$) indicating that higher scores for correct responses in the principles subscale, there may be an increase in permissive parenting. Furthermore there is a negative correlation between permissive parenting and correct responses for the parenting subscale for the total sample ($r = -.30^{**}$) and the low socio-economic group ($r = -.41^{**}$).

5.8 Summary of findings

The results show that overall parents are fairly knowledgeable about child development however parents seemed to have less knowledge in the norm and milestones subscales. While both low and high socio-economic groups are knowledgeable, there is a significant difference in what they know and subsequently parents in the low socio-economic group scored higher in the norms and milestones subscales than parents in the higher socio-economic group. The prevalent parenting style in both groups was authoritative parenting followed by permissive parenting. Furthermore the results show that there is no correlation between knowledge of

child development and authoritative parenting, although associations were found between knowledge of child development and parenting styles for other subscales.



CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The sequential exploratory study design allows for the results of the two phases to be integrated at this stage of the study. The current study is a presentation of the comparative study of the relationship between knowledge of child development and parenting styles in high and low socio-economic groups of parents in the phase of early childhood development. This chapter presents a discussion of the findings of the study. The findings in Chapter 4 and 5 are examined in relation to the aims and hypotheses of the thesis discussed in Chapter 1 and integrating the conceptual framework discussed in Chapter 2. This chapter also elaborates on parenting styles, knowledge of child, and the impact of socio-economic status. Finally, the limitations of the study are discussed and recommendations are offered.

6.2 Knowledge of child development

Studies of parenting knowledge cover many domains. Bornstein, Hahn, Suizzo, Cote and Haynes (2005) identified three domains of parental knowledge namely: knowledge about child development which includes knowledge about basic child requirements and abilities; knowledge about health and safety; and knowledge about strategy to meet the socio-emotional, biological and cognitive needs of the child. Parents are required to use this knowledge to interpret their child's behaviour and to guide their childrearing or parenting behaviour (Bornstein, 2002). In the systematic review, results reported by Hess et al (2004) show that knowledge scores ranged between 64.44% - 100 % with an average score of 82.87% across the participants which was considered high for the sample. The quantitative study results found that the overall score for knowledge of child development for participants

was 60.98% with participants scoring less for the norms and milestone subscale (47.95%). These scores are less than scores obtained by Hess et al (2004). However, the results of the current study are similar to a study conducted by Ertem (2007). In particular, Ertem (2007) found that knowledge of child development (or lack there of) could potentially be linked to child abuse risk. A lack of knowledge in the developmental process of the child could potentially relate to inappropriate harsh discipline measures as parents could misjudge where the child is at in the developmental process. Furthermore, Hess et al (2004) isolated the parenting subscale in the KIDI to measure parenting knowledge but the degree of knowledge for this subscale was not reported. In contrast the current quantitative study results show that parents were fairly knowledgeable in the parenting subscale with an average score of 67.30%. In addition, the results also show that parents are fairly knowledgeable on the health and safety as well as the principle subscale on the KIDI-P. The studies included in the systematic review did not report on knowledge of child development in isolation nor did it report on subscale findings separately with the exception of Hess et al (2004) that reported on overall degree of knowledge. The current quantitative study however, reports on scores for each subscale of the KIDI-P in order to identify in which areas participants are most knowledgeable, and where there is a lack of knowledge. This is necessary in order to identify potential areas to consider when developing interventions of parenting programmes. As previously discussed in Chapter 2, the aim of the National Development Plan 2030 is to improve on various components in the early childhood development sector. This includes providing and supporting future parenting programmes and the results of this study contributes to the body of knowledge regarding areas of lack in this regard. Although most of the studies included in the systematic review do not provide specific scores on overall knowledge, it does highlight certain factors to consider when examining knowledge of child development such as the role of mother and father in the child's life, education, race and

culture. This speaks to Bronfenbrenners ecological systems theory discussed in Chapter 2 that states there are several intrinsic and extrinsic factors that contribute to child development and that the systems interrelate with each other, for example, the relationship between child and parent in the microsystem is affected by the macrosystem which inform culture, belief and certain values which is then transferred onto the child through the parents. Effects of other factors that influence knowledge are apparent in studies such as Hess et al (2004) who found that older mothers who were more educated, had higher income and were married had a greater degree of knowledge pertaining to child development. Several researchers that conducted similar studies support these findings (Bornstein & Putnick, 2007; Culp, Osofsky, & O'Brien, 1996; Rowe, Pan, & Ayoub, 2005). Another study (Winter, Morawska & Sanders, 2011) found that parents higher in education demonstrated greater knowledge than their lower education counterparts and these results support the findings of Morawska et al, (2009). Another factor, which could potentially influence knowledge, is culture as highlighted in Hess et al (2004) and is supported by previous research conducted by Bornstein & Cote (2004) stating that knowledge differs within and across cultures. Lastly another factor that could potentially influence knowledge is different parent roles such as being a mother and father as seen in Morawska, et al (2011) that reported on differences between fathers and mothers degree of knowledge in child development with mothers having a greater degree of knowledge as opposed to fathers. Hence comparison between this study and previous studies is challenging as knowledge of child development or parental knowledge was not properly defined or examined in detail in previous studies.

6.3 Parenting in ECD

Children exposed to warm, responsive, consistent parenting are more likely to experience optimal child development outcomes (Guajardo et al. 2009; Stack et al. 2010) while adverse

family experiences including family dysfunction, harsh, punitive discipline practices and parental psychopathology are associated with an increased risk of child and adolescent psychopathology (Koskentausta et al. 2007). In the systematic review, Bornstein and Putnick (2007) found that there were several factors that contributed to parenting such as maternal age, child temperament, maternal confidence to mention a few. However, Bornstein and Putnick (2007) found that parenting styles differed significantly across all subscales of the Parenting Scale used to measure parenting styles. Further the results of that study show that mothers with low confidence were more lenient or negligent. As previously discussed in Chapter 2, Baumrind's typology of parenting styles describes leniency and negligence as traits of permissive parents. Another study conducted by Winsler, Madigan & Aquilano (2005) as highlighted in the systematic review found that mothers in particular were perceived to be authoritative followed by permissive and not authoritarian. The characteristics of permissive parenting include inconsistent discipline, ignoring of child misbehaviour and a lack of self confidence in parenting with the result that children display less internalized distress but externalize their problems (Williams, et al, 2009) which are supported by findings in the systematic review (Morawska & Sanders, 2007; Winter et al, 2011). The results of Winsler et al (2005) study also show that some parents reported that they were permissive indicating that they often spoiled their children on certain occasions and sometimes stated a punishment but did not follow through with it. Similarly, the quantitative results of this study found that although parents perceived and reported that their parenting style as predominantly authoritative there were some parents that reported and perceived themselves to be permissive. These results also show that participants reported that they often spoiled their child and at times did not execute stated punishment for disobedience. Interestingly, though parents reported on their own perception of parenting in the current quantitative study in contrast to the study in the systematic review, where spouses reported on each others

parenting, the results are similar (Winsler et. al., 2005). The implications of permissive parenting as supported by the study included in the systematic review, showed that parents did not know that their parenting style resulted in them spoiling their child (Morawska & Sanders, 2007). It also highlighted their inability to manage their child's aggressiveness, not knowing what to do when their child has a temper tantrum, not knowing about common fears for a specific age group and not setting limits on destructive behaviour. The implication for this style of parenting on the developing child as discussed in Chapter 2 is that the child may be unable to develop respect for authority (Gupta et al, 2006), lack creativity, motivation and self reliance resulting in low cognitive and social achievement (Grolnick, 2003). In addition according to developmental theorist such as Erikson suggest that a healthy development of self in the child requires attentive, warm, responsive and encouraging parents. Therefore a possible conclusion can be drawn that the less parents know about principles, parenting, norms and milestones and health and safety the more likely the parenting style will lean toward permissiveness. This conclusion is confirmed by the results found in the current quantitative study which showed that there is a correlation between knowledge and permissive parenting which will be further explored in the next section. While this study highlights the need to explore permissive parenting further in this context one of the objectives of the study was to determine the most prevalent parenting style. The results of this study show that the overall most prevalent parenting style is the authoritative parenting style with parents encouraging regulation, autonomy and connection. As stated earlier this is similar to the results found in Winsler et al (2005) in the systematic review. The characteristics of authoritative parenting styles include parents being warm and supportive while using reasoning approaches which allows the child the opportunity for participation. These findings can be compared to the results of previous studies conducted with children, where authoritative parenting was described as warm, supportive and nurturing, while

offering discipline and structure simultaneously (Darling & Steinberg, 1993; Maccoby & Martin, 1983).

6.4 The association between knowledge of child development and parenting styles

Previous research studies posit that the more knowledgeable parents are on child development the more effectively parents will rear their children (Reich, 2005; Huang et al, 2005; Diehl et al, 2011). In the systematic review, according to parents with greater knowledge tend to be less dysfunctional in parenting (Morawska et. al., 2007; Winsler et. al., 2005). Furthermore in a later intervention study conducted by Morawska et al (2011) the results show that post intervention parental knowledge increased and parenting dysfunction decreased, which could mean that degree of knowledge is increased, parenting approaches would potentially improve. However, the quantitative study results show that there is no significant relationship between knowledge of child development and the authoritative parenting style. The findings in the current study yielded different results than in previous studies conducted where a positive correlation was found (Culp, Culp, Blankemeyer, & Passmark, 1998; Miller, 1988; Brooks-Gunn & Benaisch, 1996). While no significant relationship exists between knowledge of child development and parenting styles, the quantitative results show that there is a significant negative relationship between knowledge of child development in particular for the parenting subscale and authoritarian parenting. This could mean that if there is a decrease in knowledge of how to parent very young children, then parents could be more authoritarian in their parenting. In the systematic review, Hess et al (2004) examined correlations between the parenting subscales and maternal confidence and found that when knowledge level was low parent confidence and competence was also low. Though a relationship exists between these two variables this does not imply that the one causes the other as there may be other factors involved that influence this relationship (Tuft, 2006:5). Other potential factors involved

when determining association between knowledge of child development and parenting styles include parental efficacy or confidence, parental age, child temperament and parental stress. The effects of these factors are evident in the studies included in the review. For example earlier studies found that deficits in knowledge of child development and unrealistic expectations on children were found mainly in younger parents (Bornstein & Putnick, 2007). Similar to this study de Lissovoy (1973) found that young parents were shown to have less knowledge about developmental milestones indicating a potential risk for unhealthy child development. One of the studies in the systematic review (Bornstein & Putnick, 2007) confirmed the findings of de Lissovoy (1973) and found that maternal age was linked to knowledge and parenting. Parental roles is also another factor to consider (Winsler et al, 2005) when examining the association between knowledge of child development and parenting. In view of this according to the demographics of this study the results show that 87.1% of the participants were mothers. This is important to note as Bornstein & Ribas (2005) posit that mothers have assumed the primary responsibility of early childcare and found that mothers were more knowledgeable than fathers. Though mothers may be more knowledgeable this does not equate to positive and effective parenting due to lack of support from the less knowledgeable spouse. This finding is supported by Dessen & Braz (2000). The current study possibly confirms that notion since the majority of participants were mothers, the knowledge level was reported at above average and the parenting style was perceived to be authoritative over the entire sample. In the systematic review, Winter, Morawska and Sanders (2011) found that parents who increased in knowledge and confidence showed reduced dysfunction and reported on less externalised behaviour of their children. While important findings have resulted for this study in terms of the relational aspects of the variables, Hypothesis 1 has not been met as there is no association between knowledge of child development and authoritative parenting styles.

6.5 Comparing low and high socio-economic groups

There is some evidence that parents in low socioeconomic status groups tend to be harsher in their child rearing (Kelley et al, 1992; Steinberg et al, 1991). Both Goodnow (1995) and McGillicuddy-De Lisi and Siegel (1995) agree that parenting knowledge has been conceptualized as a product of personal experiences with their children and their social interactions. The Ecological view (Bronfenbrenner, 1986) provides a useful framework to explain how social groups promote parenting knowledge. This framework also describes the differences in parental expectations on intellectual, social and cognitive abilities across different cultural groups and well as socio economic groups. There is some evidence to suggest that any effect of intervention on knowledge may differ depending upon the socio-economic status (SES) of parents as found in the study of Winter et al (2011) included in the review. According to Winter et al (2011) parents with higher education, which is also known to be associated with socio-economic status, hold a greater degree of knowledge in child development, which was apparent in the pre intervention phase of the study. Those findings support a much earlier study conducted by Parks and Smeriglio (1986) that also concluded that parents of lower SES tend to demonstrate less parenting knowledge than those of higher SES. The findings of the quantitative component of the current study present results which differ. The current study results show that in general parents were fairly knowledgeable and perceived their parenting to be authoritative across the groups. However, parents in the low socio economic group were significantly more knowledgeable on the norms and milestones of child development than those in the high socio economic group. Similarly, Bornstein and Ribas (2005) validate in their study that parental knowledge differ across socio-economic status. While, authoritative parenting was prevalent across the groups, more parents in the higher socio-economic group were authoritative in their approach. The results in the quantitative phase indicate that there were more permissive parents in the low socio-economic group. The

findings of this study is similar to Shumow et al (1998) who found that parents in low socio-economic environments were either harsh or permissive in their parenting. Critenden (1985; 1996) found that permissive parents are likely to be less educated, impoverished and lacking in parenting knowledge which is similar to the quantitative results of this study. No comparisons were drawn between the results of the studies in systematic review and the quantitative results of the study, in terms of comparing groups, as the systematic review only examined the association between knowledge of child development and parenting and did not include socio-economic status as a factor. However the results of the correlation done between parenting styles and the various subscales support Bronfenbrenners ecological systems view as stated in the opening statement of this section specifically where permissive parenting was found to be higher in the low socio-economic communities. This highlights that in order for the microsystem, specifically the primary caregivers, to be more effective in their contribution to optimal child development the necessary support may be required by role players in the macrosystem such as the government to address lack in education and poverty by providing opportunities for parents in the low socio-economic group to acquire various skills that could enhance better parenting.

6.6 Limitations

No research study is without its imitations. This study in particular encountered challenges and limitations which may impact the findings of this study.

1. The study sample consisted mainly of mothers with a small percentage of fathers willing to participate in the study. As previously discussed and supported by previous research mothers tend to be more nurturing than fathers. This could possibly explain the reason why the majority of parents reported as authoritative.

2. The study was conducted by means of self reporting questionnaires. The participants may have responded in a way that would not reflect negatively on them although the study was private and confidential. In other words the responses may be perceived truth and not actual truth. If the children were asked to report on their parents' parenting behaviour the outcome may have been different. The same applies to the knowledge of child development questionnaire. Parents may not necessarily want to admit that they may be using harsh and punitive measures in disciplining their children.
3. The study sample size is not large enough to generalize the findings to the entire population. Accessing parents through the ECD centre proved to be challenging thus the sampling strategy had to be changed in order to gather information. The majority of the sample classified themselves as 'coloured' therefore these finding cannot be generalized across other racial groups
4. Conducting a socio economic study is also a limitation as socio economic status is not static. In other words the participants may have indicated that they spend R500 and less on school fees which was the low socio economic status indicator in this study but may not, in the bigger scheme of society, be classified as low socio-economic status when considering all the other factors which make up socio economic status.
5. The full impact of the parental knowledge level on the child cannot be fully identified as there are other role players surrounding the child and one wonders whether child rearing beliefs and knowledge are similar or different to the participant

6.7 Recommendations

Further research studies are recommended in the area of parental knowledge and parenting styles in early childhood development as there is too little research to draw from. Perhaps future studies can look into other factors that influence parental knowledge so that a more holistic view can be obtained. Parents and the immediate primary care-givers play a pivotal role in a child's life. Therefore when conducting future studies it could benefit to gather information from all the key players in the child's life. The findings of this study also suggest that culture is potentially a huge factor that needs further research together with the other variables in this particular context since all the hypotheses for this study was mainly rejected. Because this study was done on a small sample with the majority being coloured mothers the study should be replicated on a much bigger sample to ascertain whether the results will be similar in this context or whether it supports international findings. These results highlighted the need for further parent education in norm and milestones and parenting as these were the two areas where parents were lacking. Therefore when parenting programmes are designed it would be beneficial to focus on these two aspects in order to reduce the risk of child maltreatment or abuse as well as to promote the optimal development of children during the early years. While the majority of this sample indicates that the prevalent parenting style is authoritative the permissive parenting style is highlighted as a concern. Furthermore, since clinics have access to parents they should make use of the opportunity to educate parents on the norms and milestones of a developing child. Most mothers attend antenatal screenings and it is here where the opportunity is to start educating mothers on the developing child and continue with this education when parents attend post natal screenings with the baby. Alternatively the government should make funds accessible to establish early intervention parenting centres across the country or distribute enough funds to NGO's where qualified and trained professionals can provide training and education on parenting and child development.

6.8 Conclusion

The study focused on knowledge of child development and parenting styles. A positive and healthy early childhood sets a positive trajectory for adulthood. Although this study's results should be interpreted with caution, findings suggest that parents in the South African context are predominantly authoritative and that parental knowledge level is above average. As this study suggests the level of parental knowledge does not particularly influence parenting styles. Thus, we could conclude that there may be other factors associated with parental knowledge and parenting. Although the limitations of this study may not be generalized as the sample is limited to mothers with a specific racial background the study does highlight the need for further research particularly into permissive parenting.



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Appendices

Appendix A: Letter



UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE

Private Bag X 17, Bellville 7535, South Africa

Tel: +27 21-9592970/2277

E-mail: nroman@uwc.ac.za

INFORMATION SHEET

Project Title: A comparative study of the relationship between knowledge of child development and parenting styles in high and low socio-economic groups of parents in early childhood development centres



What is this study about?

This is a research project being conducted by Shiron Jade September at the University of the Western Cape. We are inviting you to voluntarily participate in this research project because you are a parent of a pre-school child in one of the early childhood development centres selected. The purpose of the study is to determine and compare the relationship between knowledge of child development and parenting styles in high and low socio-economic groups of parents in early childhood development centres

What will I be asked to do if I agree to participate?

You will be asked to complete self-administered questionnaires pertaining to the study in the comfort of your own home. The questionnaire will take approximately 45-60 min to complete. You will then be required to send the completed form in a sealed envelope back to the ECD centre .

Would my participation in this study be kept confidential?

We will do our best to keep your personal information confidential. To help protect your confidentiality, the information you provide will be totally private; no names will be used so there are no way you can be identified for participating in this study. Your information will be anonymous and

treated confidentially. This will be done by (1) your name will not be included on the report. If we write a report or article about this research project, your identity will be protected to the maximum extent possible. The reports will be kept in a locked cabinet and only the interviewer and the research supervisor will have access to this information. The research findings will not include any personal details.

What are the risks of this research?

There are no known risks in participating in the study. However, the parents and family members may identify possible parental needs or any other need for assistance. In cases where a parent or family member presents with such a need, the interviewer will liaise with appropriate resources to assist the participant

What are the benefits of this research?

The outcome of this study may be useful to professionals and social service providers who lead and provide preparation for parenthood programmes and activities within their communities. The outcome of this study may highlight the need for intervention to enhance parenting abilities. The study also hopes to highlight that there is a great need for effective parenting programmes to be implemented in the low socio-economics. Healthcare workers may benefit from this study and use the opportunities they have with mothers attending screenings to discuss various concerns and refer where necessary.

Describe the anticipated benefits to science or society expected from the research, if any.

The study aims to highlight the need for parenting and support programmes to be implemented where necessary to improve the wellbeing of children and families.

Do I have to be in this research and may I stop participating at any time?

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to participate in this research, you may stop participating at any time. If you decide not to participate in this study or if you stop participating at any time, you will not be penalized or lose any benefits to which you otherwise qualify.

Is any assistance available if I am negatively affected by participating in this study?

Every effort has been taken to protect you from any harm in this study. If however, you may feel affected you can be referred to your nearest community resource for assistance.

What if I have questions?

You may contact me at: 076 88 11 828 or shironseptember@gmail.com or my supervisor ***Dr Roman in the Social Work Department*** at the University of the Western Cape. If you have any questions

about the research study itself, please contact Dr Roman at: Department of Social Work, tel. 021 959 2970, email: nroman@uwc.ac.za.

Should you have any questions regarding this study and your rights as a research participant or if you wish to report any problems you have experienced related to the study, please contact:

Head of Department:

Dean of the Faculty of Community and Health Sciences: **Professor Jose Frantz**

University of the Western Cape

Private Bag X17

Bellville 7535

Tel No: 021 959 2631/2746

Email address: jfrantz@uwc.ac.za

This research has been approved by the University of the Western Cape's Senate Research Committee and Ethics Committee.



CONSENT FORM FOR PARENTS

Appendix B Consent Form

Title of Research Project: A comparative study of the relationship between knowledge of child development and parenting styles in high and low socio-economic groups of parents in early childhood development centres

The study has been described to me in a language that I understand and I freely and voluntarily agree to participate in the study. My questions about the study have been answered. I understand that my identity will not be disclosed and that I may withdraw from the study without giving a reason at any time and this will not negatively affect me in any way.

Parent's name.....

Parent's signature.....

Witness.....

Date.....

Should you have any questions regarding this study or wish to report any problems you have experienced related to the study, please contact the study coordinator:

Study Coordinator's Name: Dr N Roman

University of the Western Cape

Private Bag X17, Belville 7535

Telephone: 021 959 2277/2970

Email: nroman@uwc.ac.za

Appendix C Full Questionnaire

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS BY TICKING/FILLING IN YOUR RESPONSE						
In which area do you live?						
Gender	Male			Female		
Age						
Level of education						
Race	COLOURED	BLACK AFRICAN	WHITE	INDIAN/ASIAN		
How many children do you have?						
State age and sex						
My children are	Biological children	Foster/Adopted children	Stepchild/ren	Other (please specify)		
Home Language	English	Afrikaans	IsiXhosa	Other:		
Marital Status	Never Married	Married	Separated	Cohabiting	Widow/ed	Divorced
How much crèche fees do you pay?	R0 - R500	Between R500 and R1000	Above R1000			
Who looks after your child (if not in daycare)						
Have sought	Parenting workshops	Parenting counselling	Parenting books	Search internet for parenting		

parenting support via				tips	
Who is your main source of financial support?	Own Job	Spouse/partner	Parent	Public assistance/grant	Other (please specify)
The house that I live in I	Own	Rent	Living with my parents in their house	Living on property owned by someone else e.g. wendy house	
Combined household income per month	0-R10000	R10000-R30000	R30000-R40000	Above R40000	

Knowledge of Infant Development Inventory – P



The following questions ask about children's normal behaviour. Each item describes what atypical child might be like, or what could affect the child's growth and behaviour. Answer each item based on your knowledge of children in general. We want to know how you think most children act, how they grown, and how to care for them. After you red each item, decide whether you **AGREE**, **DISAGREE**, or are **NOT SURE**. Then mark your answer in the circle

No	Statement	Agree	Disagree	Not sure
1	When toddlers are strongly attached (bonded) to their parents, they are more			

	clingy and tend to stick close to mom and dad			
2	A 2 year old who is 2 or 3 months behind other 2 years olds is developmentally delayed			
3	Children often will keep using the wrong word for while, even when they are told the right way to say it (like “feet not footses”)			
4	Babies should not be held when they cry because this will make them want to be held all the time			
5	If a baby (less than a year) wants a snack, give it nuts, popcorn, or raisins			
6	Babies do some things just to make trouble for their parents, like crying a long time or pooping in their diapers			
7	If you punish children for doing something naughty, it’s okay to give them a piece of candy to stop the crying			
8	A 2 year old can take a bath without needing to be watched			
9	A typical 4 year old can print his (her) name			
10	Infants understand only words they can say			
11	If children are shy or fussy in new situations, it means they have an emotional problem			
12	Talking to a child about things he (she) is doing helps its mental development			
13	A two year old who says “NO’! to everything and bosses you around is trying to get you upset			
14	The way a child is brought up has little affect on how smart he (she) will be			
15	Children have temper tantrums for no apparent reasons			
16	Once kids turn 3 or so, they become less defiant and negativistic – “No, I don’t want to”!			
17	A toddler who’s energetic – always on the go – needs a low-sugar diet or Ritalin			
18	Kids have little affect on how parents care for them, at least until they get			

	older			
19	When putting babies in the cot for sleep, place them on their back, not stomach			
20	A 3 and a half year old boy who wets the bed has a problem that should be seen by a doctor			
21	A brother or sister may start wetting the bed or thumbsucking when a new baby arrives in the family			
22	Four year olds are able to go to the toilet by themselves at night			
23	The 2 year old's sense of time is different from an adult's			
24	Most premature babies end up being abused, neglected, or mentally disabled			
25	Children should be at least 5 years old before they are allowed to cross the street alone			
26	Most 4 year olds can play simple board games like checkers			
27	The child 's personality or temperament is set by 6 months of age; it doesn't change much after that			
28	Some parents do not bond until their baby starts to smile and look at them			
No	Statement	Agree	Disagree	Not sure
29	The way the parent treats a baby in the first months of life determines whether the child will grow up to be well-adjusted or a moody misfit			
30	Children learn all their language by copying what they have heard adults say			
31	When children have a cold, it's okay to give them regular aspirin			
32	A 6 year old is able to ride a two-wheeled bicycle			
33	Some normal kids do not enjoy being cuddled			
34	The average 5 year old can tie his (her) shoelaces			
35	The more you soothe a crying baby by holding and talking to it,, the more you spoil them			

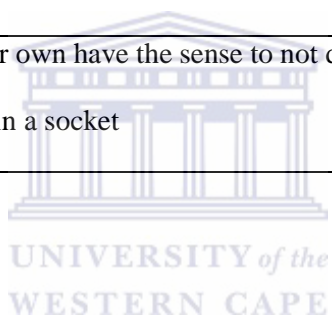
36	A common cause of accidents for toddlers is pulling something like a frying pan, a tablecloth, or a lamp down on top of them			
37	A 4 year old who sees a short-haired girl in overalls is likely to say that she is a boy			
38	A good way to teach your child not to bite is to bite back			
39	Some days you need to discipline your child; other days you can ignore the same thing. It all depends on the mood you're in that day			

Each of the following asks about the age at which infants can do something. If you **AGREE** with the statement, fill in the “**AGREE**” circle. If you do not agree, then decide whether a **YOUNGER** or **OLDER** child would show the behaviour



No	Statement	Agree	Younger	Older	Not Sure
40	Most 6 year olds can write a complete sentence				
41	By 3 years of age, most children have a favourite playmate				
42	Most 2 year olds know the difference between make-believe and true stories on TV				
43	A 5 year old can read four or more words				
44	Three year olds usually will say, “I’m sorry” when they do something wrong				
45	The average 4 year old can get dressed and undressed without help				
46	Two year olds are able to reason logically, much like and adult would				
47	One year olds know right from wrong				
48	Five year olds use plurals correctly – for example, says “men” not				

	“mans”, “mice” not mouses”, etc				
49	Most children are ready to be toilet trained by one year of age				
50	Most 3 year olds can put their shoes on the correct feet				
51	It is not until 4 years of age that kids begin to tease other children				
52	Six months olds know what “No” means				
53	Three years olds know their left hand from the right hand				
54	By 3 years of age, most children will dress up in their parents’ old clothes and play act				
55	Eighteen month olds often cooperate and share when they play together				
56	Most 6 years olds can add numbers up to 10, such as 2+2, 3+5, etc				
57	Babies usually say their first real word at 6 months				
58	By 2 years, children left on their own have the sense to not do something dangerous like poking a finger in a socket				



**PARENTING STYLES & DIMENSIONS QUESTIONNAIRE –
SHORT VERSION
(PSDQ-Short Version)**

Directions:

This questionnaire is designed to measure (1) *how often your spouse/partner* exhibits certain behaviours towards your child _____ (name) and (2) *how often you* exhibit certain behaviours towards this child.



Example:

(1) Please read each item on the questionnaire and think about *how often your spouse/partner [She]* exhibits this behaviour and place your answer on the **first** line to the left of the item.

[She]/[He] [I]

 3 _____ 1. [She/He allows][I allow] our child to choose what to wear to school.

SPOUSE EXHIBITS THIS BEHAVIOR:

- 1 = Never
- 2 = Once in Awhile
- 3 = About Half of the Time

4 = Very Often

5 = Always

(2) Then rate *how you* [I] exhibit this behavior and place your answer on the **second** line to the left of the item.

[She]/[He] [I]

 3 2 1. [She/He allows][I **allow**] our child to choose what to wear to school.

I EXHIBIT THIS BEHAVIOR:

1 = Never

2 = Once in Awhile

3 = About Half of the Time

4 = Very Often

5 = Always



[She] [I]

- _____ _____ 1. [She is] [I am] responsive to our child's feelings and needs.
- _____ _____ 2. [She uses] [I use] physical punishment as a way of disciplining our child.
- _____ _____ 3. [She takes] [I take] our child's desires into account before asking the child to do something.
- _____ _____ 4. When our child asks why he/she has to conform, [she states] [I state]:
because I said so, or I am your parent and I want you to.
- _____ _____ 5. [She explains] [I explain] to our child how we feel about the child's good and bad behaviour.
- _____ _____ 6. [She spans] [I spank] when our child is disobedient.
- _____ _____ 7. [She encourages] [I encourage] our child to talk about his/her troubles.
- _____ _____ 8. [She finds] [I find] it difficult to discipline our child.
- _____ _____ 9. [She encourages] [I encourage] our child to freely express himself/herself even when disagreeing with parents.
- _____ _____ 10. [She punishes] [I punish] by taking privileges away from our child with little if any explanations.

- _____ 11. [She emphasizes] [I emphasize] the reasons for rules.
- _____ 12. [She gives] [I give] comfort and understanding when our child is upset.
- _____ 13. [She yells or shouts] [I yell or shout] when our child misbehaves.
- _____ 14. [She gives praise] [I give praise] when our child is good.
- _____ 15. [She gives] [I give] into our child when the child causes a commotion about something.
- _____ 16. [She explodes] [I explode] in anger towards our child.
- _____ 17. [She threatens] [I threaten] our child with punishment more often than actually giving it.
- _____ 18. [She takes] [I take] into account our child's preferences in making plans for the family.
- _____ 19. [She grabs] [I grab] our child when being disobedient.
- _____ 20. [She states] [I state] punishments to our child and does not actually do them.
- _____ 21. [She shows] [I show] respect for our child's opinions by encouraging our child to express them.
- _____ 22. [She allows] [I allow] our child to give input into family rules.
- _____ 23. [She scolds and criticizes] [I scold and criticize] to make our child improve.
- _____ 24. [She spoils] [I spoil] our child.
- _____ 25. [She gives] [I give] our child reasons why rules should be obeyed.
- _____ 26. [She uses] [I use] threats as punishment with little or no justification.
- _____ 27. [She has] [I have] warm and intimate times together with our child.
- _____ 28. [She punishes] [I punish] by putting our child off somewhere alone with little if any explanations.
- _____ 29. [She helps] [I help] our child to understand the impact of behaviour by encouraging our child to talk about the consequences of his/her own actions
- _____ 30. [She scolds or criticizes] [I scold or criticize] when our child's behaviour doesn't meet our expectations.
- _____ 31. [She explains] [I explain] the consequences of the child's behaviour
- _____ 32. [She smacks] [I smack] the child when the child misbehaves