

## Parenting Styles and Its Effect on Self-Esteem of Adolescents

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### ABSTRACT

This study primarily aims at assessing and studying the parenting styles and its effect on the self-esteem of adolescents, specifically in Indian context. 'Parenting styles' are of four main types which are authoritarian, authoritative, permissive and neglectful parenting style. Three main styles out of these namely authoritarian, authoritative and permissive style of parenting have been kept as the focus of this study to assess their effect on the self-esteem of adolescents since both theoretically and practically it has always been documented and proved that the neglectful approach of parents always negatively impact the children and adolescents' factors related to their 'self', therefore it is not kept in the inclusion criteria for this study. The selected sample for this study consisted of a total of 120 participants (60 female and 60 male) adolescents selected from Delhi and NCR in India, the age range kept as 16-18years (with no mental and physical disability, regular school going adolescents, with nearly same socio-economic background and only those from unbroken nuclear families with mothers who were homemakers). The findings showed that there is no significant difference between permissive and authoritative parenting both in case of mothers' and fathers' parenting on the self-esteem of adolescents and both these styles of parenting mostly results in higher self-esteem among adolescents as compared to authoritarian style of parenting which is found to have a significant negative correlation with the self-esteem of adolescents. Also, not much difference is found between the self-esteem levels of male and female adolescents in present times in urban Indian context.

**Keywords:** *Adolescence, Parenting Styles, Authoritarian, Permissive, Authoritative, Self-Esteem, Inter-Parental Consistency, Inter-Parental Inconsistency.*

Parenting continues to exist as the most demanding and taxing yet satisfying, pleasing and valuable experience which proves to be rewarding in its own perplexing ways. 'Parenting style' is a term that emphasizes on the parental actions and reactions towards their child which involves beliefs they carry, expectations they have and show values and beliefs on how actually parents help, support, take care of the child and how they punish the child. There are four main styles of parenting given by child development professionals globally: Authoritative, authoritarian, permissive and neglectful parenting. Self-Esteem is one's sense of self and self-evaluation. Baumrind has documented specific association and relationship that exists between styles of parenting and self-esteem. (Williams, Family educator and counselor) in her article mentions that

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## Parenting Styles and Its Effect on Self-Esteem of Adolescents

for a healthy family life it is very much important for the parents to develop and practice consistent intra as well as inter-parenting. In India, Fathers' generally are more physically distant as compared to mothers and father-child relationship generally is marked by obedience and compliance while most of the time of mothers is spent taking care of their children (Ranganath and Ranganath,1997). Overall, Much of research work is required in the area of parenting in South Asian families especially in India since researches based on predominant parenting styles practiced and their effect of self-esteem of children and adolescents in India are scarce.

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

*Deshpande and Chhabriya (2013)* did a research on parenting styles and its effect on adolescents' self-esteem for which they focused on adolescent teenagers and conveyed through their research that due to generation gap between parents and their adolescents and inability of parents to understand their adolescents, conflicts arise. Their findings included that adolescents who perceive acceptance attitude in their parents have a higher self-esteem than the adolescents who perceive avoidance and concentration attitude in their parents, parental acceptance or support is positively related to adolescents' self-esteem. And that mild punishment from parents can result in high self-esteem in adolescents' as they view their parents as their care taker and sometimes protector.

*Driscoll (2013)* , studied the link between self-esteem and parenting styles at four stages of life with four different age points .The results showed that self-esteem was lowest during 14 years of age for the children in general, reason being it's the stage when they experience tough times in the sense that there are various changes that they have to deal with ranging from their body to the relationships they have with their friends and family and most common type of parenting changes to permissive parenting during 18-23 years of age, in general. Children from authoritative families had higher self-esteem at all four age points as compared to children from authoritarian families. Even permissive parenting was found to result in higher self-esteem levels in comparison to authoritarian parenting.

*MacDonald, Steger and Adams from University of British Columbia* did a study on Child rearing-behaviors and Adolescent Self-esteem - An examination of reciprocal effects. In this study the influence of perceived parental support and control on adolescents' self-esteem was examined. Their result showed a reciprocal relationship between perceived parental behavior and adolescent's self-esteem, a positive association between parental support and adolescent self-esteem and a negative association between parental control and their adolescent self-esteem was found.

*Fletcher, Steinberg and Sellers (1999)*, studied how the well-being of adolescents is connected to the Inter-parental Consistency perceived by the adolescents. The comparison was made between adolescents from families where inter-parental consistency was existent with adolescents who were from homes where inter-parental consistency was absent. It was found that adolescents who

## Parenting Styles and Its Effect on Self-Esteem of Adolescents

had parents who exercise consistent inter-parenting but authoritarian or non-authoritative parenting were lower in their academic achievements as compared to those who had single authoritative parent. Also, adolescents having one authoritative and one authoritarian parent were having higher internalized distress in comparison to those who had consistent parental practices.

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### ***Purpose and Objectives of the Study:***

The present study aimed at studying the parenting styles and its effect on self-esteem of adolescents, to assess the effect of inter-parental consistency on the self-esteem of adolescents and to assess the effect of parenting style on self-esteem influenced by the gender of the adolescents. It was hypothesized that: there would be no significant difference between authoritative and permissive parenting style both associated with high self-esteem among adolescents, Authoritarian parenting style would be associated with low self-esteem among adolescents, there would be a significant difference between inter-parental consistency and inter-parental inconsistency on the self-esteem of adolescents and that there would be a significant difference in the self-esteem between male and female adolescents.

#### ***Sample :***

The selected sample consists of the total of 120 participants (60 males 60 females) selected from Delhi and NCR (Noida and Gurgaon) in India in the ages between 16-18 years with no mental and physical disability, regular school going adolescents, with nearly same socio-economic background and only those from unbroken nuclear families with mothers who were homemakers.

#### ***Tools:***

1. *Coopersmith Inventory Adult Form*- developed by Coopersmith in the year 1987. It has 25 items to be answered by the respondents.
2. *Parental Authority Questionnaire (both forms)* – developed by Dr. John R. Buri in the year 1991. It has 30 items per form.

#### ***Statistical Analysis :***

Separate total scoring done for the two tests based on scoring method to be applied for both the tests individually.

- Finding Mean Scores, Standard Deviation, t-test , Correlation Coefficient and Graphical representations of the results found.

**RESULTS AND ANALYSIS**

*Table 1.1 (a) Comparison Of Mean, SD and t- values between Self-Esteem Levels Of Adolescents with Permissive Mothers and Those With Authoritative Mothers*

TABLE 1.1 (a)

Mothers		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-test
	Permissive	15	66.40	12.81071	.006
	Authoritative	81	66.37	17.50175	.008

Table 1.1 (a) clearly indicates that there exists no big difference between the self-esteem of adolescents who experience permissive parenting and those who experience authoritative parenting by their mothers.

*Table 1.1 (b) Comparison Of Mean, SD and t- values between Self-Esteem Levels Of Adolescents with Permissive Fathers and Those With Authoritative Fathers*

TABLE 1.1 (b)

Fathers		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-test
	Permissive	24	70.83	12.675	1.378
	Authoritative	72	65.55	17.254	1.604

Table 1.1 (b) The results clearly indicates that although, the range in which the average scores fall shows that on an average permissive parenting by fathers results in slightly higher self-esteem levels than authoritative parenting by fathers on the self-esteem of adolescents but there exists no major difference between the self-esteem of adolescents who experience permissive parenting and those who experience authoritative parenting also, even in the case of fathers.

**Table 1.2 (a)** :Shows data of self-esteem levels of 120 adolescents (60 males and 60 females) against their mothers’ authoritarian style of parenting. **Mothers’ authoritarian style of parenting** has been documented as authoritarian style present or absent under the heading of ‘parenting style of mothers’ . Authoritarian style “present” is given as “1” and Authoritarian style “absent” is given as “0”.

Parenting Styles and Its Effect on Self-Esteem of Adolescents

TABLE 1.2 (a)

A = Self-Esteem Of Adolescents			r = -0.322			B = Parenting Style Of Mothers		
S. No.	A	B	S. No.	A	B	S. No.	A	B
1	72	0	41	60	1	81	32	0
2	68	0	42	40	1	82	76	0
3	72	0	43	64	0	83	64	1
4	84	0	44	76	0	84	64	1
5	36	1	45	84	0	85	52	0
6	88	0	46	20	1	86	60	0
7	60	0	47	80	0	87	64	0
8	72	0	48	64	0	88	68	0
9	76	0	49	88	0	89	56	0
10	24	0	50	88	0	90	28	0
11	40	0	51	56	0	91	28	0
12	20	0	52	72	0	92	56	0
13	64	0	53	80	0	93	84	0
14	80	0	54	60	0	94	52	1
15	84	0	55	68	0	95	68	0
16	84	0	56	84	0	96	72	1
17	84	0	57	84	0	97	56	0
18	52	0	58	88	0	98	52	1
19	56	1	59	88	0	99	80	0
20	68	0	60	76	0	100	76	0
21	12	1	61	28	0	101	92	0
22	64	0	62	76	0	102	40	0
23	60	0	63	72	0	103	68	0
24	64	0	64	60	1	104	56	1
25	84	0	65	76	1	105	60	0
26	88	0	66	52	0	106	36	1
27	24	1	67	84	0	107	84	0
28	72	0	68	72	0	108	72	0
29	40	0	69	76	1	109	88	0
30	60	0	70	80	0	110	52	0
31	76	0	71	76	0	111	64	0
32	92	1	72	48	0	112	64	0
33	44	0	73	64	0	113	72	0
34	32	1	74	52	0	114	76	0
35	84	0	75	20	1	115	40	0
36	64	1	76	72	0	116	80	1
37	80	0	77	52	0	117	76	0
38	56	1	78	48	1	118	80	0
39	52	0	79	40	0	119	60	0
40	64	0	80	44	0	120	44	1
						TOTAL	6808	22
						MEAN	63.03704	0.203704

Table 1.2 (b) Shows data of self-esteem levels of 120 adolescents (60 males and 60 females) against their fathers' authoritarian style of parenting. **Fathers' authoritarian style of parenting** has been documented as authoritarian style present or absent under the heading of 'parenting style of fathers'. Authoritarian style 'present' is given as "1" and Authoritarian style 'absent' is given as "0".

Parenting Styles and Its Effect on Self-Esteem of Adolescents

TABLE 1.2 (b)

A = Self-Esteem Of Adolescents						Correlation = -0.4029		
B = Parenting Style Of Fathers						Significance at 0.05 = 0.150		
S.No.	A	B	S.No.	A	B	S.No.	A	B
1	72	1	41	60	0	81	32	1
2	68	0	42	40	1	82	76	0
3	72	0	43	64	0	83	64	0
4	84	0	44	76	0	84	64	0
5	36	1	45	84	0	85	52	0
6	88	0	46	20	1	86	60	0
7	60	0	47	80	0	87	64	0
8	72	0	48	64	1	88	68	0
9	76	0	49	88	0	89	56	0
10	24	0	50	88	0	90	28	1
11	40	0	51	56	0	91	28	0
12	20	0	52	72	0	92	56	0
13	64	1	53	80	0	93	84	0
14	80	0	54	60	0	94	52	0
15	84	0	55	68	1	95	68	0
16	84	1	56	84	0	96	72	0
17	84	0	57	84	0	97	56	0
18	52	0	58	88	0	98	52	0
19	56	1	59	88	0	99	80	0
20	68	0	60	76	0	100	76	1
21	12	1	61	28	0	101	92	0
22	64	0	62	76	0	102	40	1
23	60	0	63	72	1	103	68	1
24	64	0	64	60	0	104	56	0
25	84	0	65	76	0	105	60	0
26	88	0	66	52	0	106	36	1
27	24	0	67	84	0	107	84	0
28	72	0	68	72	0	108	72	0
29	40	1	69	76	0	109	88	0
30	60	0	70	80	0	110	52	1
31	76	0	71	76	0	111	64	0
32	92	0	72	48	0	112	64	0
33	44	0	73	64	0	113	72	0
34	32	1	74	52	1	114	76	0
35	84	0	75	20	1	115	40	1
36	64	0	76	72	0	116	80	0
37	80	0	77	52	0	117	76	0
38	56	0	78	48	0	118	80	0
39	52	0	79	40	0	119	60	0
40	64	0	80	44	0	120	44	0
						MEAN	63.33333	0.19167
						SD	18.60574	0.39526

## Parenting Styles and Its Effect on Self-Esteem of Adolescents

Result summary table for data table 1.2 (a) and 1.2 (b) as shown above-

Groups	Correlation Coefficient	
	R	Sig. value
Authoritarian Mothers and Self-Esteem Of their Adolescents - (A and B)	-0.322	0.15
Authoritarian Fathers and Self-Esteem Of their Adolescents – (A and B)	-0.402	

Result Table 1.2 (a) and (b) clearly indicates a significant correlation between mothers' authoritarian parenting and the self-esteem of their adolescents and also between fathers' authoritarian parenting and sense of worth of their adolescents and the 'negative sign' of correlation coefficient is indicative of the existent negative correlation between the two factors.

**Table 2 :Comparison Of Mean, SD And t-Values Between Inter-Parental Consistency And Inter-Parental Inconsistency In Parenting Styles**

SELF-ESTEEM	Parenting	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-test
	Consistent	72	63.000	19.7534	.134
	Inconsistent	49	62.531	17.5821	.137

Table 2: There is no significant difference between consistent and inconsistent inter-parenting. Inter-parental consistency and inter-parental inconsistency on an average have resulted in the average levels of self-esteem.

**Table 3:Comparison Of Mean, SD And Values Of t-obtained And t-critical Of Self-Esteem Between Male And Female Adolescents**

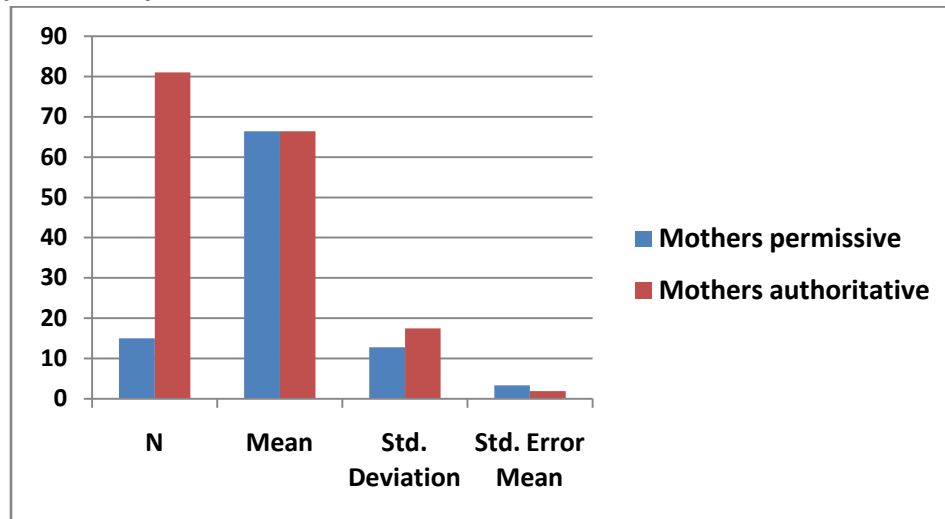
Sample	N	Mean	SD	t-test	
				t-obt	t-crt
Males	60	65.26	20.16	0.11	1.65
Females	60	61.4	16.8		

## Parenting Styles and Its Effect on Self-Esteem of Adolescents

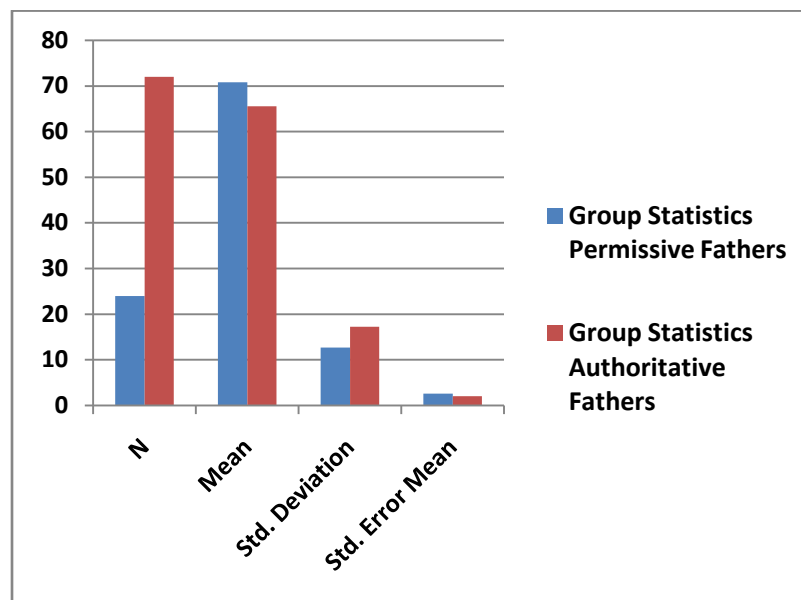
Table 3 :The results indicate that though the self-esteem levels of male adolescents on an average in this study is slightly higher than the female adolescents but the difference between the two is not much significant since the t-obt is smaller than the t-critical and on an average both males and females have average levels of self-esteem.

The **graphical representations** of the self-esteem of adolescents and parenting styles of their mothers and fathers based on the results found:

**GRAPH 1: Self-esteem Of Adolescents With Permissive Mothers and Authoritative Mothers**



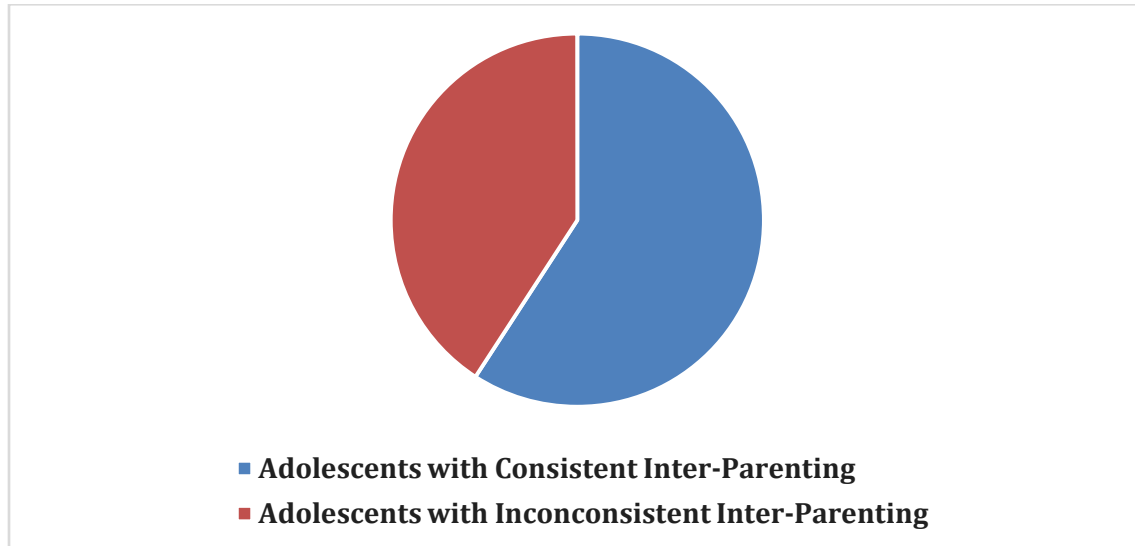
**GRAPH 2: Comparison Between Number Of Adolescents With Permissive Fathers And Those With Authoritative Fathers Along With The Comparison Of Mean And SD Of Self-Esteem Levels Between These Two Groups Of Adolescents**



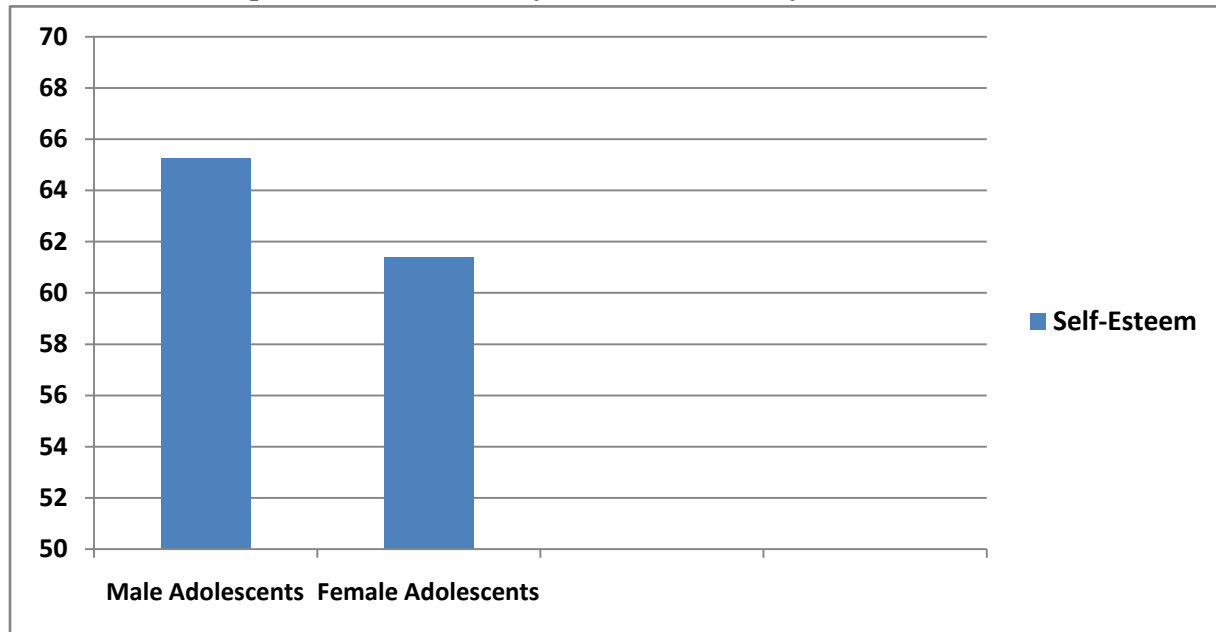


## Parenting Styles and Its Effect on Self-Esteem of Adolescents

**PIE-CHART: Percentage Of Adolescents Having Parenting Styles With Inter-Parental Consistency And Those With Inter-Parental Inconsistency**



**GRAPH 3 : Comparison Between Self-Esteem Levels Of Male and Female Adolescents**



## DISCUSSION

The aim of the present study was to study the effect of parenting styles on the self-esteem of the adolescents. The sample selected comprised of 120 adolescents (60 males and 60 females). The adolescents were in the age range of 16-18 years (late adolescence). The very first parameter on which this study focuses was to find out how each type of parenting style effects the self-esteem of adolescents in Indian urban society. The results of hypothesis 1 part (a and b) makes it evident that there actually exists no significant difference between the adolescents who have mothers and fathers with permissive style of parenting and those whose mothers and fathers adopts

## Parenting Styles and Its Effect on Self-Esteem of Adolescents

authoritative style of parenting. Also, that most of the adolescents with permissive and/or authoritative mothers and fathers had higher self-esteem levels. Had there been fewer gaps between the number of adolescents with permissive fathers and those with authoritative fathers, there is a high possibility that even this slight difference might not have occurred. Thus, it is evident from the result table 1.1 (a) and 1.1 (b) that hypothesis 1 part (a) is accepted. These findings are also seen to be in coordination with another research that had proved that the adolescents experiencing authoritative as well as permissive or indulgent parenting tends to gain higher levels of confidence in oneself (*Lamborn, Mounts, Steinberg and Dornbusch, 1991*), a variable though different from Self-esteem but is very much related to it since sense of worth would highly affect confidence in one's self and vice-versa. Also, the second part of the hypothesis 1(b) stating that 'authoritarian parenting is associated with low levels of self-esteem among adolescents' of this study was proved wholly i.e., in terms of both the mothers and the fathers authoritarian style of parenting. The present study's finding relates to a study already done which emphasized that authoritative and permissive parenting yields positive effects on the self-esteem of children and adolescents whereas authoritarian style of parenting is yields negative results on self-esteem of children and adolescents (*Chiew, 2011*). Also, results indicate that majority of parents provides inter-consistent parenting to their children in today's times in Indian urban context. But there exists no difference as such in the self-esteem levels of adolescents with inter-parental inconsistency and those with inter-parental consistency which could be because of many others factors also working upon the sense of self-worth of these adolescent. Another objective of this study was to assess the effect of parenting style on self-esteem influenced by the gender of the adolescents, the results obtained for which shows that there doesn't exist any significant difference between the sense of self-worth among male adolescents and female adolescents A major reason for which is that majority of the adolescents (both males and females) received authoritative parenting from at-least one of the parent. In the present time in Indian urban context there are maximum instances of parents adopting and providing authoritative parenting without consciously discriminating upon their parental approach based on the traditional beliefs of North Indian patriarchal culture linked to 'gender' of their child, which tends to lower the instances of difference between self-esteem levels of male adolescents and female adolescents in a general scenario. The present findings are in contrast to some researches done in the earlier times in Asian and Indian context in particular. For instance, one of these studies mentioned that there is often a discouragement of autonomy by parents in South Asians including India unlike in East Asian countries (*Chao & Tseng, 2002*). Overall, this the results for this study done suggests that there in today's times most parents (mothers as well as fathers) are providing their adolescents with authoritative parenting styles in urban societies of North India. Which is a relatively new and clear finding in contrast to the old research findings on parenting styles in Asian and Indian contexts giving more evidences for authoritarian parenting being majorly adopted in these contexts.

### CONCLUSION

The present study was done with the aim of studying the parenting styles and its effect on the self-esteem of adolescents, specifically of in Indian urban context. The main objective of doing this study is in the fact that though there exists a good amount of work done in this area but majority of the work is undertaken for adolescents in western cultures. The study suggests that there does not exist any significant difference between the permissive parenting style and authoritative parenting style of both fathers and mothers in terms of their effect upon the self-esteem of adolescents, and that in most cases these two styles of parenting results in higher levels of self-esteem as compared to authoritarian style of fathers' as well as mothers' parenting. Infact a significant negative correlation exists between fathers' and mothers' authoritarian parental approach and the self-esteem of their adolescents. Also, it was observed from the results that there is no significant difference between the effect of inter-parental consistency and inter-parental inconsistency on the sense of self-worth among the adolescents and no specific effect on self-esteem led by the gender of the adolescents. Overall, with the help of this study it can be suggested that keeping in mind the consistency as well as discrepancies of the results of this study with the findings for the effect of inter-parental consistency and inter-parental inconsistency on adolescents in some of the different researches already done in this area, what seems as the only option is a 'mid-way' which reminds of a 'good cop and bad cop formula', that may prove to be more efficient from time to time in parenting.

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