

Parental styles and their impact on affective development in early childhood

Estilos parentales y su incidencia en el desarrollo afectivo de la primera infancia

Os estilos parentais e o seu impacto no desenvolvimento afectivo da primeira infância

Lidia Patricia Estrella Acencio*
Alba Isabel Heras Cordero**
Alexandra Cecibel Huerta Cruz***

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to analyze the influence of parental styles on the affective development of children between 4 and 5 years of age. The methodology was of mixed approach, field, bibliographic type and under the method of analysis-synthesis reasoning. The research techniques were an interview to the director of the institution, a survey addressed to parents and a checklist applied to the children. The results showed that the authoritarian and permissive style is the most prevalent in 4-year-old children. In addition, it was noted that the communication and family functionality used by parents have a direct consequence on the emotional state of the children.

Key words: Parental styles, teaching, family functionality, affective development.

Resumen

El presente trabajo tiene como propósito analizar la influencia de los estilos parentales en el desarrollo afectivo en niños de 4 a 5 años. La metodología fue de enfoque mixto, de campo, tipo bibliográfica y bajo el método de razonamiento análisis-síntesis. Las técnicas de investigación fueron una entrevista al director de la institución, una encuesta dirigida a los padres y una lista de cotejo aplicada a los niños. Los resultados demostraron que el estilo autoritario y permisivo es el que más prevalece en niños de 4 años de edad. Además, se denota que la comunicación y la funcionalidad familiar que emplean los padres de familia tienen una consecuencia directa en el estado emocional de los pequeños.

Palabras clave: Estilos parentales, enseñanza, funcionalidad familiar, desarrollo afectivo.

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*Doctor in Education
University of Guayaquil
lidia.estrellaa@ug.edu.ec
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3628-0481>

**D. in Education
University of Guayaquil
alba.herasc@ug.edu.ec
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4967-3356>

***Doctor in Education
University of Guayaquil
alexandra.huertac@ug.edu.ec
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2719-3960>

Resumo

O objectivo deste documento é analisar a influência dos estilos parentais no desenvolvimento afectivo das crianças de 4 a 5 anos de idade. A metodologia foi de abordagem mista, de campo, de tipo bibliográfico e sob o método de raciocínio de análise-síntese. As técnicas de investigação foram uma entrevista com o director da instituição, um inquérito dirigido aos pais e uma lista de verificação aplicada às crianças. Os resultados mostraram que o estilo autoritário e permissivo é o mais prevalecente nas crianças de 4 anos. Além disso, verificou-se que a comunicação e a funcionalidade familiar utilizadas pelos pais têm uma consequência directa sobre o estado emocional das crianças.

Palavras-chave: estilos parentais, ensino, funcionalidade familiar, desenvolvimento afectivo.

INTRODUCTION

In view of this premise, where the pre-school stage, children from 4 to 5 years of age begin with the development of prosocial skills and behaviors, it is important to assess the affective development and parenting styles of children, in this case derived from the parenting style received by their guardians, which constitutes an axis of attention; those that are considered inadequate may affect childhood and lead to social problems on which strategies should be oriented to generate spaces and develop prosocial behaviors.

Parental styles should not only be analyzed as the parental affection that the child receives from his parents, but also the perceptions and inferential processes, the emotional climate that he receives from the environment and the objectives of upbringing. For this reason, parental styles should be identified through a bibliographic study and motivate affective development in the children of this locality.

Regarding population characteristics, according to information presented by the National Institute of Statistics and Census (INEC) describes that the nation has a population of 16'278,844 inhabitants, where multiethnic and multicultural characteristics are determined and composed of mestizo, Afro-Ecuadorian, indigenous, and white population. Zone 8 has a high population density, slightly implying a significant percentage of men, as expressed by Datos Macro (2021). This last indicator is interesting because of the type of population that will be evaluated in this study.

It is appropriate to note that worldwide there is a growing interest in schools to promote activities to improve the daily interaction between parent and child. This kind of activities would benefit children in improving social relations with their environment, favoring their emotional control, improving their individual and collective interaction with friends, classmates, teachers, mainly to participate in learning and socialization scenarios with greater adaptability.

Considering that in the province of Guayas there are not so many activities that allow household members to participate and the predominance of men as parental figure, with a high effort to work, affective development and parental education in children under 5 years of age may be a key factor, not addressed. In relation to the "National Plan for Comprehensive Prevention and Control of the Socioeconomic Phenomenon of Drugs 2017 - 2022", academic failure is one of the risk factors considered in Ecuador; for such reason, the need to make the educational system work by establishing a solid structure of values related to affections and more effective intervention of the family, allows it to reduce drug use and help reduce conflicts.

The report details that parental style initiatives are crucial in addressing the various problems related to the educational growth of Guayas. These family inclusion programs have proven to be effective in the treatment of behavioral difficulties, such as aggressive behavior, consumption and use of narcotic substances, and deficiencies in academic and social skills (OAS, 2013).

According to the above, it can be highlighted that the role of the representatives within the educational field of their students is transcendental, since the parental style they apply has a significant impact on their development, therefore, it is important to take into account how they are educating the children, fundamentally to promote positive parenting styles, since if they use an inappropriate style with their children they can have unfavorable consequences in the development of the infants and sometimes it is due to deficiencies in the knowledge acquired by the parents or other family members.

One of the most important factors in the bond between parents and their children is the affective development, which significantly influences the development of the student's integral personality, since his personal balance, decisions, behaviors, relationship with others and with himself depends on it. The effects of adopting one parenting style or another are markedly different; children who grow up with authoritarian parents grow up with insecurity and withdrawal, since excessive control prevents them from developing their autonomy,

resulting in high dependence and personal dissatisfaction, with a tendency to rebellion.

However, the most disadvantaged are the children because they suffer negative effects of the styles adapted by their parents. Therefore, the democratic style is considered to bring the greatest benefits and is suitable for children to have high self-esteem, good adaptability and independence, to be respectful of their peers and to form better social relationships.

In this aspect, family dynamics have a direct influence on the growth of its members, considered as the first school of love and knowledge, being the basis in the life of the human being from childhood, parents form the personality, become a role model, as an example of life for the child.

According to a manual presented by the United Nations Children's Fund, UNICEF (2022, p. 33) states that "emotional bonds and experiences influence brain development". This implies that it is very important for the child's upbringing, because everything that happens in the first stages of his life, are vital for the brain development of the infant, generating confidence, security in the activities performed by the infant in his daily life.

As indicated by Andrade and González (2017), negative parenting styles characterized by physical punishment, recurrent yelling or other aggressions, end up affecting children permanently as they determine for life their way of learning.

Therefore, this study is considered convenient, since it seeks to provide solutions to the study problem, which allows us to analyze the influence on the affective development and parental styles, as well as the factors that intervene significantly in the behavior of the infant. This topic is convenient to analyze in order to demonstrate how parental styles influence children and to identify how the role of the father or mother influences their emotional behavior, whether or not it favors their learning and emotional competencies, which are the basis of their growth.

The social relevance consists of the inquiry to be carried out on the affective development of children, developing a model of healthy coexistence so that the representatives can interact, educate and reinforce the behavior at home, the same that can be reflected in the classroom.

The practical implications are aimed at working with families, through the guidance of activities directed to parents, thus developing affective capacities in the children of the institution, who must have

the necessary support to be able to educate and positively influence the affective development of those they represent.

On the other hand, the present study will facilitate the analysis from a theoretical perspective, to better understand the affective development and contribute to detail the characteristics of the parental styles at the same time this research will fill a gap in knowledge, based on the research topic, which will help and strengthen the affective part of the students in relation to the predominant style of their parents.

Lozano (2017) from the Graduate School Universidad César Vallejo of Peru, conducted research with the topic: "Educational styles of parental type and how it is related to social skill in 5 year old boys in the Educational Unit N317 Montecarmelo" In that work theories such as Maccoby's were raised highlighting the variations that exist in terms of child rearing, contributing to Baumrind's theory relating to parenting styles, whose objective was to know how the educational style of parents is related to the social skills of their children, through a cross-sectional, non-experimental design, using a sample of 35 legal representatives and research instruments, such as the scale of educational styles and social skills of parents.

According to the article published in the Argentine Journal of Relational Psychotherapy and Social Interventions in their research work entitled "Infant Emotional Self-regulation and Parental Styles", Losada et al. (2020), where they propose to identify how parental styles influence issues related to emotional self-regulation in students, based on narrative reviews of published data.

In the infancy period we move from externalized regulation, provided through their parents and how it is contextualized to internal regulation, where an infant acquires control mechanisms.

Emotional self-regulation is considered the subject's capacity to change his/her behavior in response to the demands of specific experiences. Parenting styles are classified as democratic, authoritarian, permissive and negligent. The democratic parenting style, used with authority, flexibility, responsibility and affection, is considered the best for their intellectual and moral growth, unlike other styles that present more risk factors interfering with adequate emotional development. Empirical studies on the variables of parenting styles and emotional self-regulation in infants are suggested.

In the scientific article of the authors: Pinta et al., (2019) which was entitled: "Early childhood, relational analysis in the development of emotional competencies and parenting styles" Its essential purpose

was the relationship between strengthening the development of emotional skills and parenting styles, in order to determine that there are deficiencies, impairing the development of affective and behavioral skills. The method used was descriptive and exploratory with a quantitative measurement scope, being essential the field observation to evidence the improvement of emotional skills in children, based on the parenting styles used by their parents is very important for the infant to achieve an optimal emotional development.

The authors Castro and Paredes (2019), presented the topic "Parenting styles in the behavior of infants aged 4 to 5 years Workshops for the development of parenting skills for parents" conducted for the National University of Cordoba. Its purpose was to evaluate how the parenting style affects the behavior of children from 4 to 5 years old of the "Escuela de Educación Básica Fiscal Clemencia Coronel de Pincay", considering the contributions of several educators; Salvador Minuchin, Vygotsky and Virginia Satir, additional the design met the requirements, the same allowed finding answers to existing problems, using theoretical, analytical-synthetic and inductive-deductive methods, in addition to bibliography and field research.

On the other hand, Aguirre and Villamar (2022) in their research project entitled "Emotional development and parenting style in infants from 5 to 6 years old of the Ancon Educational Unit during the confinement time by Covid-19". They showed that the parenting style is the way in which parents monitor how infants behave and that they are important because they have a significant impact on the development of infants' thinking. The purpose of this study was the analysis of the emotional development and parenting style in infants from 5 to 6 years old of the Ancon Tiempo Educational Unit of Covid-19 through a bibliographic and descriptive research, in order to design a guide of activities addressed to regular caregivers. The methodology was of mixed approach being bibliographic, exploratory and field, using instruments such as surveys and interviews.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The methodological utility used in the study is of a mixed type, since in the first instance the information is obtained from the theoretical bases, through the collection of information that is needed.

Through the inductive-deductive method, it allows us to understand the study variables, analyzing them from their particularity, towards their general characterization. In addition, it allowed us to draw conclusions about the parental styles in the affective development, which is carried out with the groups of parents, participants of the educational institute.

The population is made up of 35 students, 35 parents, 1 authority and 1 teacher, which is what involves an entire educational institution, and who possess similar qualities and make up the universe related to the research problem. In this study, the population is composed of students between 4 and 5 years old, parents and the institution's management staff.

A survey was prepared with 10 questions, which was addressed to the parents of the children attending the educational institution, and was applied online through the Google Forms platform. In this way, we sought to identify the reliable opinion of the group of parents to be investigated. In this research we worked with a Likert scale with five categories, which allows us to evaluate and know the level of conformity of an individual surveyed according to the premise; their appreciation is very important for the analysis of the conclusions.

Additionally, another survey was designed with 10 closed questions for parents and representatives, in relation to the variables of study, parental styles in the affective development, to collect and analyze results, also, a script of 5 questions was made for the interview to the Rector of the institution. In this way it was possible to obtain the conclusions and final recommendations regarding the research problem.

Finally, a checklist with 12 indicators was executed to evaluate children from 4 to 5 years of age in the Initial 2 sublevel, in order to observe their affective relationships. According to Pérez (2018, p. 2), the ideal is to make a list of actions or behaviors that are sought to observe and structure them to give answers to the questions formulated. That is, through this instrument it was possible to verify the behavior, attitudes and determine the predominant parental style of students.

RESULTS

Below are the results of the interview applied to the director of the institution and the checklist applied to the students.

Interview with the director of the institution:

- 1. Do you think that parenting styles influence the behavior and affective development of children in early childhood education?*

Answer: Of course we do. Nowadays we have different parenting styles, generally this comes from the family side and according to the new trends in many cases families are destroyed and in a direct way the early school stage is affected.

Analysis: It is important to mention that in the educational institution there are several types and family situations, on which the well-being of the child will depend.

2. *Why would the application of activities linked to the identification of parenting styles be important?*

Answer: It would be very important, because this is practically the fundamental basis for the academic performance of the students, here we have different types of parents, 50% of them are attentive to their children and the other 50% are the opposite, that half is the consequence of school failure, that is why it would be important to apply activities to eliminate these consequences from the initial stage and thus it would not affect a higher grade.

Analysis: Educators will need to implement activities that allow the parent to participate and interact in an affective way with the student, and thus change the parental styles that have been part of their home.

3. *Do you know if teachers are concerned about the emotional development of students?*

Answer: Of course, it is one of the things that teachers keep in mind, not only for themselves, but also within the institutional regulations that the emotional and affective aspect of the student comes first, each of the teachers is concerned about how the child is when they observe something different, how they feel, if something affects them.

Analysis: The teachers of the institution are trained to inform the situations that each student shows in their affective and social part in the classroom.

4. *What tactics do teachers use to strengthen students' affective development?*

Answer: Well, we have here mainly what is the active and direct implementation of the teacher towards the student. It also seems to me that, because of the maternal part that each

teacher has, it helps us a lot to try to implement some free strategy, by listening, helping and providing security to the student.

Analysis: The institution enables the teaching staff to transmit their experiences in an integral and active manner, awakening and strengthening critical thinking in each of their students.

5. *Do you consider the design of a guide for parents, aimed at strengthening parental competencies, as transcendental?*

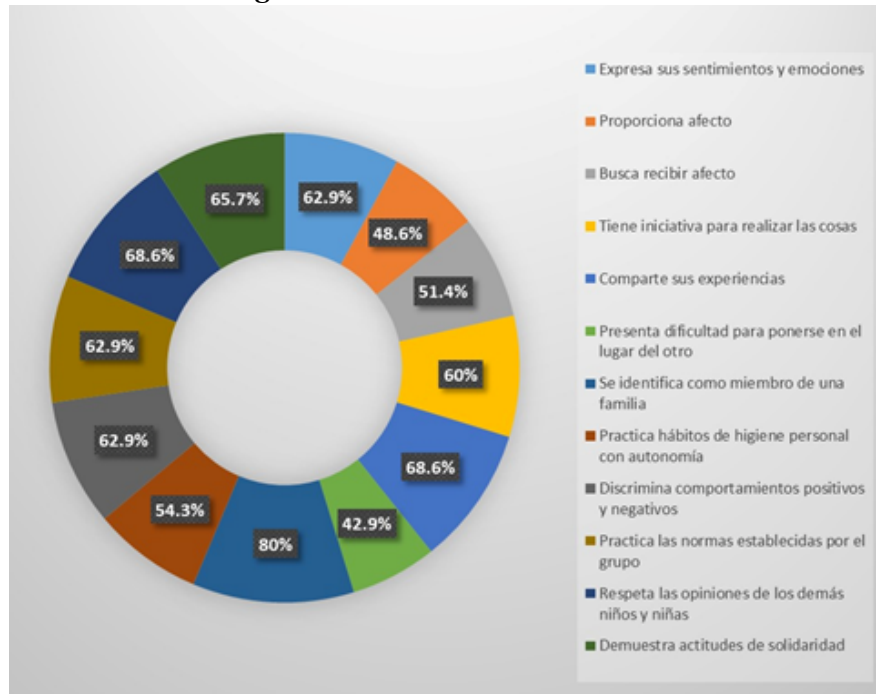
Answer: Of course, since there are currently families made up only by the father or mother and in many cases by neither of the parents, but by third parties, and if this guide is developed, it would be a fundamental and essential basis for the academic and emotional development of the students.

Analysis: A structurally elaborated guide for parents is required, where interest can be awakened during the teaching and learning process of their children.

Checklist:

The checklist applied to the students consisted of choosing between yes and no to the different statements shown in Fig. 1 below:

Figure. 1. Results of the checklist



CONCLUSIONS

By means of the checklist it was possible to observe and analyze the most relevant figures related to the emotional bonds of the children. As can be seen in the first item, a percentage of 62.9% of the children do express their feelings and emotions, however, a total of 37.1% did not express any emotion, this figure is a little alarming because children at this age should expose their emotions and feelings because they may have future consequences such as depression, frustration and failure to resolve conflicts.

On the other hand, in items 2 and 3 it was found that 51.4% of students do not provide affection and 48.6% do not seek affection. These figures show how fundamental it is to strengthen affective bonds within the home, being necessary to do so in the early years of life so that the child can relate and express him/herself with the family. Likewise, regarding item 5, 31.4% of students do not share their experiences, affecting their socialization with others; it is essential that they express their experiences to strengthen their security and self-esteem by being listened to.

Finally, in items 10 and 11 with a percentage of 37.1% and 31.4% respectively, do not practice or follow established rules and do not respect the opinions of others, considered as somewhat negative attitudes on the part of the children. For this reason, it is substantial to design a guide for parents aimed at strengthening the affective development of their child to achieve an adequate interaction, through different established activities, to contribute to a more effective social emotional and intellectual bond.

The following conclusions can be drawn from this:

- The parents of the educational institution make use of the authoritarian parenting style.
- It is evident that parents who exercise a strict and authoritarian parenting style influence the affective development of children.
- The design of a guide for parents with playful and didactic activities will favor the affective development of children from 4 to 5 years old.
- The director of the educational institution states that parenting styles have an impact on the child's school performance.
- The evaluation showed that some children do not seek or give affection to others.

To conclude, the following is recommended:

- For parents, seek professional guidance to learn the mechanisms of communication with their children, avoiding behaviors that may negatively affect their emotional and psychological development.
- To students, researchers and teachers, to continue with studies that allow to investigate the long-term consequences that can have a person who has been exposed since childhood to adverse situations due to the authoritarianism applied by parents during their upbringing.
- Conduct parenting schools within the educational institution to strengthen parental functions, achieving positive effects on the child's school performance.
- Reinforce communication, attention and affection within the home, so that the child feels loved and secure.

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