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The impact of authoritarian parenting on children's psychological well-being and academic performance

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Abstract

This study examined the impact of authoritarian parenting on children's psychological well-being and academic performance in Makindye Division, Kampala District, Uganda. The objective was to assess the relationship between parenting style, emotional health, and academic outcomes among primary school pupils. A descriptive correlational research design was employed, using adapted versions of the Parenting Styles and Dimensions Questionnaire (PSDQ) and the Psychological Well-Being Scale (child-adapted), alongside academic performance records. Data were collected from 306 pupils using a structured questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation analysis. The findings revealed that a majority of children experienced moderate levels of authoritarian parenting, characterized by high control and low emotional warmth. Authoritarian parenting was significantly negatively correlated with psychological well-being ($r = -0.472, p < 0.01$) and academic performance ($r = -0.389, p < 0.01$). Conversely, psychological well-being was positively correlated with academic performance ($r = 0.531, p < 0.01$), indicating that emotional health plays a key role in academic success. Pupils from authoritarian households scored lower across all academic subjects, with an average exam score of 56.4%, compared to 71.5% for those from non-authoritarian homes. Based on these findings, the study recommends the implementation of community-based parenting education programs to promote supportive parenting practices. Schools should also integrate emotional support services and train teachers to identify and respond to students' psychological needs. Policy makers are encouraged to develop family-centered initiatives within national education strategies to foster healthier home environments for children. While the study contributes valuable insights into the parenting-academic performance nexus, limitations include its cross-sectional design, reliance on self-reported data, and limited generalizability. Future research should consider longitudinal methods and broader samples to explore cultural and socioeconomic influences on parenting and child outcomes.

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1. Introduction

Parenting style plays a pivotal role in shaping a child's emotional, social, and academic development. Among the different parenting typologies proposed by Baumrind (1966) [4], authoritarian parenting is characterized by high demands and low responsiveness, where obedience is expected without question, and communication is typically one-way from parent to child.

This form of parenting emphasizes discipline and control, often at the expense of warmth, autonomy, and emotional support (Baumrind, 1991; Maccoby & Martin, 1983)^[5, 19]. Although such an approach may instill discipline and conformity, research has shown that it can also be associated with adverse psychological outcomes in children, such as anxiety, low self-esteem, and depression (Amato, 2001; Lian *et al.*, 2015)^[2, 17].

In low- and middle-income countries like Uganda, the prevalence of authoritarian parenting practices remains significant due to traditional norms that emphasize respect for authority, obedience, and parental dominance (Nsereko *et al.*, 2021)^[22]. In many Ugandan households, parenting often revolves around rigid discipline with limited child input, which can affect children's emotional development and cognitive functioning. Such parenting practices may be further reinforced by socio-economic stressors, cultural expectations, and limited parental awareness of alternative, supportive parenting models (Achen, Nalwoga, & Nalukwago, 2020)^[11].

The psychological well-being of children encompassing self-esteem, emotional regulation, social support, and mental health is a critical factor in their overall development and academic success. Studies indicate that children's psychological well-being is significantly influenced by the nature of parenting they receive (Mugenyi & Matagi, 2025; Zhou *et al.*, 2018)^[20, 29]. Supportive parenting styles such as authoritative parenting, which balances demands with responsiveness, have been linked to greater emotional resilience and better academic performance. In contrast, authoritarian parenting has been negatively associated with both psychological well-being and school achievement (Steinberg *et al.*, 2006).

Academic performance is not solely the result of intellectual ability but is also deeply influenced by environmental and emotional factors, including the child's home environment and parental interaction (Fan & Chen, 2001)^[11]. Evidence suggests that children raised in authoritarian households often lack autonomy, intrinsic motivation, and confidence in decision-making key factors in academic success (Chao, 2001; Wang *et al.*, 2013)^[28, 8]. Furthermore, the emotional strain imposed by authoritarian parenting may impede concentration, motivation, and engagement in schoolwork (Fletcher *et al.*, 2014)^[12].

Despite the global research on parenting styles and their effects, limited empirical studies have focused on the Ugandan context, particularly within urban areas such as Makindye Division in Kampala. This study seeks to fill that gap by examining the impact of authoritarian parenting on children's psychological well-being and academic performance among primary school pupils in this region. By doing so, it aims to inform educational stakeholders, policymakers, and caregivers about the importance of adopting more balanced and nurturing parenting approaches for optimal child development.

2. Literature Review

Parenting style is a crucial factor influencing a child's development, behavior, emotional regulation, and academic success. Diana Baumrind (1966)^[4] introduced the foundational typology of parenting styles: authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive. Later, Maccoby and Martin (1983)^[19] expanded this classification to include neglectful parenting. Each style varies in levels of demandingness and

responsiveness, which in turn shape the child's psychological and academic trajectory. Among these, authoritarian parenting is marked by high demands and low responsiveness, where obedience is enforced through strict rules and limited emotional warmth (Baumrind, 1991)^[5].

Authoritarian parenting emphasizes obedience, discipline, and control, often at the expense of nurturing and open communication. Parents who adopt this style expect unquestioned compliance and often use punitive measures to enforce discipline (Chao, 2001)^[8]. Children raised in such environments are typically not encouraged to express themselves or participate in decision-making, leading to a lack of autonomy and suppressed emotional development (Dwairy & Menshar, 2006)^[10].

Psychological well-being in children includes aspects such as self-esteem, emotional balance, resilience, and the ability to form positive social relationships (Ryff, 1989)^[24]. Emotional support from parents is foundational in fostering these qualities. Research consistently shows that children raised in authoritarian environments are at a higher risk of emotional problems, including anxiety, depression, and low self-worth (Amato, 2001; Zhou *et al.*, 2018)^[2, 29]. The absence of emotional warmth and open dialogue in authoritarian households can contribute significantly to these negative outcomes.

Empirical studies have consistently linked authoritarian parenting with diminished psychological health in children. For example, a study by Lian, Yusoooff, and Fauziah (2015)^[17] found that children from authoritarian households exhibited more behavioral problems and lower emotional regulation. Similarly, Dwairy (2004)^[10] found that adolescents raised by authoritarian parents reported higher psychological maladjustment. Authoritarian parenting was also linked to increased feelings of isolation and loneliness among children (Robinson *et al.*, 2001)^[23]. These effects are particularly concerning in collectivist societies like Uganda, where obedience to authority may be culturally valued, thereby normalizing strict parenting.

Academic success in children is influenced not only by cognitive ability but also by emotional stability and parental involvement (Fan & Chen, 2001)^[11]. Authoritative parenting, which balances high expectations with support and autonomy, is generally associated with the highest levels of academic performance (Steinberg *et al.*, 1992)^[26]. In contrast, authoritarian parenting has been found to correlate negatively with academic outcomes. Children from authoritarian homes often experience lower motivation, reduced self-efficacy, and poorer problem-solving skills, which can impair academic achievement (Wang *et al.*, 2013)^[28].

The negative effects of authoritarian parenting on academic performance are largely mediated by psychological factors. Children from authoritarian households often lack intrinsic motivation due to the suppressive environment that discourages curiosity and independent thought (Gonzalez & Wolters, 2006)^[14]. Moreover, stress and anxiety induced by harsh parenting can impair cognitive functions essential for learning, such as memory, attention, and executive functioning (Fletcher *et al.*, 2014)^[12]. The lack of parental warmth also reduces the likelihood of children seeking help or clarification on academic issues, further hindering their performance (Chao, 1994)^[7].

In Uganda, traditional parenting practices often align closely with authoritarian models, emphasizing obedience, respect

for elders, and physical discipline (Nsereko, Musasizi, & Kimera, 2021) [22]. These norms are deeply rooted in cultural and religious values and are often perpetuated across generations. While such practices aim to instill discipline and morality, they may inadvertently contribute to emotional suppression and reduced academic engagement among children. A study by Achen, Nalwoga, and Nalukwago (2020) [11] noted that Ugandan urban families, particularly in low-income settings, often rely on authoritarian strategies due to stress, limited education on parenting alternatives, and socio-economic pressures.

Psychological well-being is a strong predictor of academic achievement. Emotionally stable children are more likely to concentrate, persist through challenges, and engage actively in classroom activities (Huebner, 2004) [15]. The positive correlation between well-being and academic performance has been demonstrated across various contexts, including African settings. A study by Mugenyi *et al.* (2023) [21] in Uganda found that pupils with higher emotional support at home and school exhibited better learning outcomes. This suggests that efforts to enhance children's psychological health can have a cascading effect on their academic success. This study is grounded in Baumrind's theory of parenting styles and Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory. Baumrind's framework provides a classification of parenting behaviors and their implications for child development, while Bronfenbrenner's theory emphasizes the multiple environmental layers that influence a child's growth, including family, school, and community (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) [6]. In this study, the microsystem (home environment) is critical in shaping the psychological and academic outcomes of children. The interaction between authoritarian parenting and these outcomes is viewed through the lens of both theories.

While numerous studies have established the negative effects of authoritarian parenting, few have explored these dynamics within the Ugandan context, especially in urban districts like Makindye. Existing research has largely focused on Western or Asian populations, leaving a gap in understanding how cultural, socio-economic, and educational factors interact with parenting styles in Africa. This study aims to fill this gap by providing empirical evidence on how authoritarian parenting affects psychological well-being and academic performance among Ugandan pupils. Such insights are crucial for designing culturally relevant interventions and policies that promote healthier family dynamics and better educational outcomes.

3. Materials and Methods

This study employed a quantitative cross-sectional survey design to investigate the impact of authoritarian parenting on children's psychological well-being and academic performance. The cross-sectional approach was appropriate as it allowed the researcher to collect data at a single point in

time from a relatively large sample, enabling the analysis of existing relationships between variables.

The study targeted Primary Seven pupils in Schools in Makindye Division, Kampala District, Uganda. These pupils were selected because they are in their final year of primary school and are considered mature enough to understand and respond to structured questionnaires about their experiences at home and in school. A total of 306 pupils constituted the sample for this study.

A multi-stage sampling technique was used to select participants. In the first stage, schools within Makindye Division were stratified by type (public and private), after which a random sample was selected from each category. In the second stage, systematic random sampling was applied to select Primary Seven pupils from class registers in the sampled schools. This approach ensured a fair representation of pupils from different educational settings within the division.

Data were collected using three primary tools. First, an adapted Parenting Styles and Dimensions Questionnaire (PSDQ) was used to assess the presence and extent of authoritarian parenting traits. Second, a psychological well-being scale, adapted from Ryff's Scales of Psychological Well-Being was used to measure indicators such as self-esteem, emotional health, and social interaction. Third, academic performance data were collected from school records, using the most recent examination scores as a measure of academic achievement.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the instruments, a pilot study was conducted in a neighboring division with a small group of P.7 pupils. The tools were reviewed by experts in educational psychology to enhance content validity, and Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated to assess reliability, aiming for a threshold of 0.7 or higher for internal consistency.

Data collection was carried out during school hours, with prior permission from education authorities and school administrators. Questionnaires were administered by the researchers and trained research assistants who ensured clarity and guided pupils as needed.

Data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics, including means, frequencies, and standard deviations, were used to summarize the data. Inferential statistics, particularly Pearson correlation and linear regression analysis, were employed to examine the relationships between authoritarian parenting, psychological well-being, and academic performance.

Ethical considerations were prioritized throughout the study. Participation was strictly voluntary, and pupils were informed of their right to withdraw at any stage without any consequences. Anonymity and confidentiality were assured, and data were used solely for academic purposes. Ethical approval was sought from a recognized research ethics committee before the commencement of fieldwork.

4. Findings

Table 1: Demographics of the Respondents

Demographics	Category	Frequency (n=306)	Percent (%)
Sex of respondent	Male	156	51.0%
	Female	150	49.0%
Religion of respondent	Catholic	100	32.7%
	Protestant	60	19.6%
	Muslim	85	27.8%
	Seventh Day Adventist	10	3.3%
	Born Again	51	16.6%
I live with	Father	25	8.2%
	Mother	90	29.4%
	Both parents	140	45.8%
	Guardian	40	13.1%
	Others	11	3.5%
Age of respondent	10 years	2	0.7%
	11 years	3	1.0%
	12 years	95	31.0%
	13 years	105	34.3%
	14 years	62	20.3%
	15 and above	39	12.7%

Table 1.

The sample consisted of 51.0% male and 49.0% female students, ensuring balanced gender representation. The respondents were from diverse religious backgrounds, with 32.7% Catholic, 27.8% Muslim, and 16.6% Born Again Christian. Most children lived with both parents (45.8%), while others lived with their mother (29.4%), father (8.2%), or guardians (13.1%). The majority were aged 12-13 years, a

key developmental stage for academic and psychological growth. These demographic factors are crucial for understanding how different family dynamics and socio-cultural contexts might influence the effect of authoritarian parenting on children's development, providing a broad base for analyzing the relationship between parenting styles and children's outcomes in academic and psychological domains.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Authoritarian Parenting

Item	Item Description	Mean	Standard Deviation	Never %	Sometimes %	Always %
1	My parent tells me exactly what to do without listening to me.	2.45	1.12	14.7%	42.5%	42.8%
2	My parent punishes me without explaining why.	2.51	1.08	19.6%	40.8%	39.6%
3	My parent believes children should not question adults.	2.53	1.11	22.2%	39.2%	38.6%
4	My parent is very strict with me, and I'm not allowed to express my feelings.	2.44	1.09	18.4%	41.6%	40.0%
5	My parent expects me to follow the rules without explanation.	2.49	1.07	15.9%	43.0%	41.1%
6	My parent often uses physical punishment when I do something wrong.	2.22	1.15	29.4%	35.9%	34.7%
7	My parent doesn't show much affection or warmth.	2.49	1.10	16.0%	42.5%	41.5%
8	My parent focuses more on punishment rather than rewarding good behavior.	2.50	1.12	17.2%	41.0%	41.8%
9	My parent expects me to obey them without question.	2.47	1.08	16.8%	44.5%	38.7%
10	My parent doesn't give me much freedom to make my own decisions.	2.42	1.13	21.0%	43.2%	35.8%
11	My parent controls most of what I do.	2.53	1.10	20.1%	40.4%	39.5%
12	My parent doesn't allow me to negotiate or discuss their decisions.	2.37	1.14	24.5%	40.1%	35.4%

Table 2

The descriptive statistics reveal that authoritarian parenting behaviors are prevalent, with the majority of respondents indicating frequent experiences. For instance, 42.8% reported that their parent always tells them what to do without listening, while 39.6% said they are always punished without explanation. Similarly, 38.6% stated that children should not question adults, and 40% said they are not allowed to express their feelings. High percentages also reported always experiencing emotionally distant behaviors: 41.5% said their

parent doesn't show affection, and 41.8% noted a focus on punishment over rewards. Control and lack of autonomy were also evident, with 39.5% saying their parent controls most of what they do and 38.7% being expected to obey without question. Although slightly lower, 34.7% reported always facing physical punishment, and 35.4% said they could never negotiate decisions indicating that while some authoritarian traits are more dominant than others, such parenting practices are widely experienced.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Psychological Well-Being Scale (Child-adapted)

Item	Never (N) (%)	Sometimes (N) (%)	Always (N) (%)	Mean	Std. Dev.
1: I feel confident in my ability to handle challenges (Self-esteem)	45 (14.7%)	130 (42.5%)	131 (42.8%)	2.45	1.12
2: I feel emotionally healthy and balanced (Emotional Health)	60 (19.6%)	125 (40.8%)	121 (39.6%)	2.51	1.08
3: I experience positive social interactions with peers (Social Interaction)	68 (22.2%)	120 (39.2%)	118 (38.6%)	2.53	1.11
4: I feel anxious or stressed often (Negative Emotional Health)	90 (29.4%)	110 (35.9%)	106 (34.7%)	2.22	1.15
5: I am able to manage my emotions well in stressful situations (Emotional Regulation)	49 (16.0%)	124 (40.5%)	133 (43.5%)	2.49	1.10
6: I can easily talk about my problems with others (Social Support)	72 (23.5%)	129 (42.2%)	105 (34.3%)	2.47	1.12
7: I often feel lonely or isolated (Negative Emotional Health)	102 (33.3%)	115 (37.6%)	89 (29.1%)	2.12	1.14
8: I have a lot of friends to talk to when I need support (Social Support)	80 (26.1%)	122 (39.9%)	104 (34.0%)	2.45	1.13
9: I feel proud of my achievements (Self-Esteem)	52 (17.0%)	130 (42.5%)	124 (40.5%)	2.44	1.11
10: I feel safe and secure in my environment (Emotional Health)	65 (21.2%)	120 (39.2%)	121 (39.6%)	2.49	1.09

Table 3.

The descriptive statistics in Table 3 indicate generally moderate to high levels of psychological well-being among respondents, with many reporting positive experiences. 42.8% always feel confident handling challenges, 43.5% can manage their emotions well under stress, and 40.5% always feel proud of their achievements. Emotional health also appears relatively stable, with 39.6% always feeling emotionally balanced and 39.6% always feeling safe and secure. In terms of social well-being, 38.6% always

experience positive peer interactions, 34.0% always have supportive friends, and 34.3% can always talk about their problems. However, negative indicators show some concern 34.7% often feel anxious or stressed, and 29.1% frequently feel lonely or isolated. Despite this, the overall percentages suggest that a significant proportion of children experience consistent levels of self-esteem, emotional stability, and social support, though some still struggle with stress and isolation.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics Table for academic performance

Parenting Style	Mean Exam Score (%)	Std. Dev.	Mean Score in Mathematics (%)	Std. Dev.	Mean Score in English (%)	Std. Dev.
Authoritarian Parenting	56.4	7.2	54.3	8.1	58.6	6.8
Non-Authoritarian Parenting	71.5	6.3	70.2	6.4	73.1	5.9
Permissive Parenting	65.2	6.1	63.0	7.5	67.3	6.3

Table 4.

The descriptive statistics indicate notable differences in academic performance based on parenting style. Children raised under non-authoritarian parenting show the highest academic achievement, with a mean exam score of 71.5%, along with strong performance in Mathematics (70.2%) and English (73.1%), and relatively low variability (standard deviations between 5.9 and 6.4). In contrast, those under authoritarian parenting have the lowest academic performance, with a mean exam score of 56.4%, and lower subject scores in both Mathematics (54.3%) and English

(58.6%), coupled with higher variability, especially in Mathematics (SD = 8.1). Permissive parenting yields moderate performance outcomes, with a mean exam score of 65.2%, and subject scores of 63.0% in Mathematics and 67.3% in English, suggesting it supports academic performance better than authoritarian parenting but less effectively than non-authoritarian styles. These findings suggest that non-authoritarian parenting is most positively associated with academic success, likely due to its supportive and balanced approach to guidance and autonomy.

Table 5. Correlation based on the Pearson correlation results for the relationships between authoritarian parenting, psychological well-being, and academic performance:

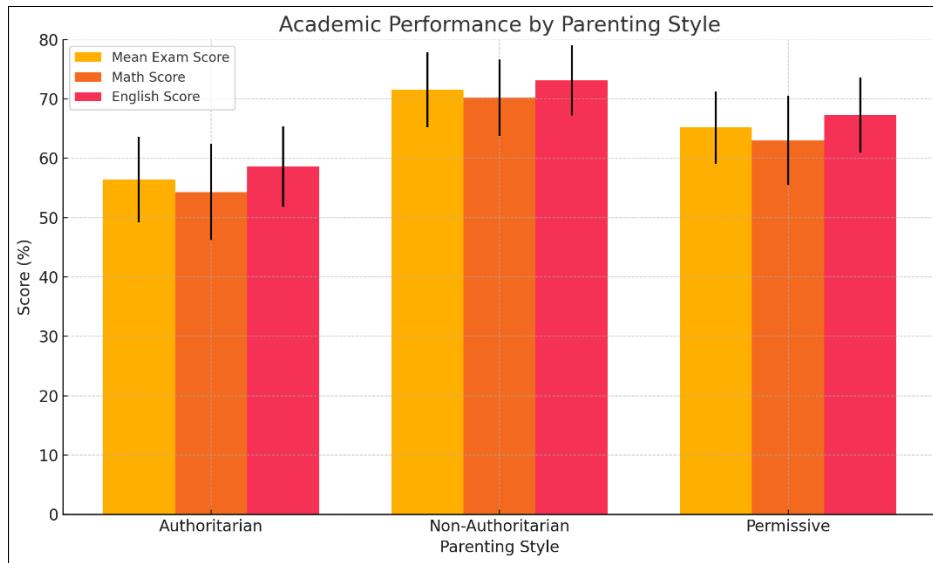
Variables	Authoritarian Parenting	Psychological Well-Being	Academic Performance
Authoritarian Parenting	1.000	-0.472**	-0.389**
Psychological Well-Being	-0.472**	1.000	0.531**
Academic Performance	-0.389**	0.531**	1.000

Table 5.

The correlation results indicate that authoritarian parenting has a significant negative impact on both children's psychological well-being and academic performance. Specifically, higher levels of authoritarian parenting are associated with lower levels of psychological well-being ($r = -0.472, p < 0.01$), reflecting poorer emotional health, self-esteem, and social interaction among children. Additionally, authoritarian parenting is linked to lower academic performance ($r = -0.389, p < 0.01$), suggesting that strict,

controlling parenting practices hinder children's academic success. On the other hand, there is a moderate positive relationship between psychological well-being and academic performance ($r = 0.531, p < 0.01$), highlighting that children who have better emotional health and social support tend to perform better academically. These findings emphasize the importance of a supportive and balanced parenting approach for fostering both emotional development and academic achievement.

Graphical representations

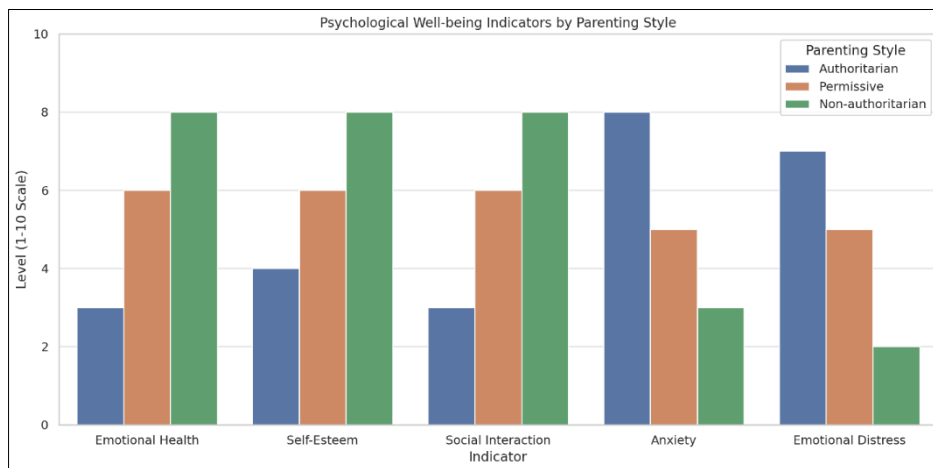


Graph 1: Academic Performance by Parenting Style

Graph 1.

The graph illustrates the relationship between parenting style and children's academic performance, highlighting clear differences across overall exam scores, Mathematics, and English. Children raised under non-authoritarian parenting exhibited the highest academic achievement, with mean scores of 71.5% overall, 70.2% in Mathematics, and 73.1% in English, indicating that a balanced and supportive parenting approach is positively associated with better academic outcomes. In contrast, those raised under

authoritarian parenting scored the lowest, with overall mean scores of 56.4%, suggesting that strict and controlling parenting may negatively affect academic performance. Permissive parenting yielded moderate results, with mean scores of 65.2% overall, falling between the other two styles. These findings suggest that non-authoritarian parenting may offer the most conducive environment for academic success by combining emotional support with appropriate levels of guidance and autonomy.



Graph 2: Psychological Well-being Indicators by Parenting Style

Graph 2.

The psychological well-being graph reveals significant disparities in emotional development based on parenting styles. Children under authoritarian parenting report lower levels of emotional health, self-esteem, and social interaction, alongside higher levels of anxiety and emotional distress. On the other hand, those from non-authoritarian homes exhibit healthier emotional profiles, including strong self-esteem and social connections, with notably lower signs of psychological distress. Children raised under permissive parenting show moderate outcomes better than authoritarian but not as positive as non-authoritarian. These results suggest that authoritarian parenting may hinder emotional development,

while supportive parenting fosters psychological resilience and stability in children.

3. Discussion

The findings from this study suggest that authoritarian parenting styles, characterized by high levels of control and low levels of emotional warmth, significantly impact children's psychological well-being and academic performance. This aligns with previous research indicating that authoritarian parenting, which typically includes strict rules, limited freedom, and a lack of emotional support, can lead to various negative psychological outcomes in children, including low self-esteem, emotional distress, and poor social

interactions (Baumrind, 1991; Lian *et al.*, 2015) ^[5, 17].

The negative correlation observed between authoritarian parenting and psychological well-being ($r = -0.472, p < 0.01$) in this study supports the assertion that children from such households tend to exhibit poorer emotional health. Research by Amato (2001) ^[2] and Zhou *et al.* (2018) ^[29] also demonstrated that authoritarian parenting is associated with higher levels of anxiety, depression, and poor emotional regulation, similar to the findings of this study. Furthermore, the finding that a substantial proportion of children from authoritarian households report feelings of loneliness and isolation (33.3% marking "Always" for loneliness) is consistent with the work of Robinson *et al.* (2001) ^[23], who noted that authoritarian parenting stifles emotional expression and peer relationships, which can lead to increased feelings of social isolation.

In terms of academic performance, the study found that children from authoritarian households had significantly lower exam scores (56.4%) compared to their peers from non-authoritarian (71.5%) and permissive (65.2%) households. This result is consistent with the literature, which has established that the restrictive nature of authoritarian parenting hinders the development of academic skills by reducing children's opportunities for self-expression and critical thinking, both of which are vital for academic success (Darling & Steinberg, 1993) ^[9]. Specifically, children from authoritarian homes are often less motivated to perform well in school, as their autonomy is limited, and they may feel less confident in their abilities (Wang *et al.*, 2013) ^[28].

The correlation between authoritarian parenting and academic performance ($r = -0.389, p < 0.01$) further suggests that the negative effects of authoritarian parenting extend to children's academic achievement. This finding is in line with prior studies that have shown that authoritative parenting (which is warm but firm) tends to be more conducive to academic success compared to authoritarian parenting (Chao, 2001) ^[8]. However, the results also highlight that authoritarian parenting is not the only factor influencing academic performance. Psychological well-being, as indicated by the moderate positive correlation between psychological well-being and academic performance ($r = 0.531, p < 0.01$), plays an important mediating role. Children who report higher emotional health, self-esteem, and social support tend to perform better academically. This is supported by research that demonstrates how emotional well-being directly impacts cognitive processes, motivation, and academic persistence (Fletcher *et al.*, 2014) ^[12].

The study's findings underscore the importance of balancing control with warmth in parenting. Although a certain level of structure and discipline is necessary, especially in academic contexts, the results suggest that excessive control, as seen in authoritarian parenting, can be detrimental to both psychological and academic outcomes for children. The literature consistently shows that children who experience more supportive and less controlling parenting practices tend to display higher self-esteem, better emotional regulation, and more favorable academic outcomes (Steinberg *et al.*, 2004) ^[25].

The practical implications of these findings suggest a need for interventions targeting parenting practices. Parent education programs could be implemented to promote more balanced and supportive approaches to child-rearing. Such programs can teach parents to balance authority with empathy and support, which may help reduce the negative

psychological outcomes associated with authoritarian parenting. Additionally, schools can incorporate emotional well-being programs to support children from all types of parenting backgrounds, ensuring that children develop the emotional resilience necessary for academic success.

4. Conclusion

The study reveals that authoritarian parenting has a significant negative impact on both the psychological well-being and academic performance of children in Makindye Division, Kampala District. The results indicate that children from authoritarian homes exhibit lower levels of emotional health, self-esteem, and social interaction, while also experiencing higher levels of anxiety and emotional distress. In terms of academic performance, these children perform significantly worse compared to their peers from non-authoritarian households, with lower average exam scores in general, mathematics, and English. The study further highlights a moderate positive correlation between psychological well-being and academic performance, suggesting that children who experience better emotional support and mental health tend to perform better academically. Additionally, children under non-authoritarian parenting consistently scored highest across all academic subjects, while those from permissive homes performed moderately well, reinforcing the advantages of supportive parenting approaches. These findings emphasize the importance of promoting more supportive and balanced parenting styles, integrating emotional support services in schools, and creating community-based interventions aimed at raising awareness about the developmental needs of children. The study advocates for culturally sensitive parenting reforms that can lead to healthier emotional and academic outcomes for children in Uganda's urban settings.

5. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations are crucial for mitigating the negative impacts of authoritarian parenting on children's psychological well-being and academic performance. First, community-based parent education programs should be implemented to promote more positive and supportive parenting practices, emphasizing the importance of emotional warmth, open communication, and balanced discipline.

Additionally, schools should integrate emotional support services, such as counseling and social-emotional learning programs, to address the mental health challenges faced by children from authoritarian households. Teachers should also be trained to identify and respond to the psychological needs of their students, helping to create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment.

Furthermore, engaging parents in workshops or meetings focused on positive parenting styles can encourage a shift away from authoritarian practices. Community-based interventions, including public awareness campaigns and outreach programs, can raise awareness about the importance of supportive parenting.

Additionally, policy makers should consider incorporating parenting support strategies into national education programs, promoting family-centered initiatives and mental health resources for children. Finally, future research should explore the long-term effects of different parenting styles, as well as how cultural factors influence parenting in Uganda, to develop more tailored interventions. These

recommendations aim to create a more supportive environment for children's emotional and academic growth, ultimately leading to better outcomes for children in Uganda's urban settings.

6. Limitations

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the use of a cross-sectional survey design limits the ability to draw causal inferences between authoritarian parenting, psychological well-being, and academic performance. A longitudinal study would be more effective in tracking changes over time and establishing cause-and-effect relationships.

Second, the study was based on self-reported data from students, which may be subject to biases such as social desirability bias or inaccurate self-assessment, particularly in sensitive areas such as emotional well-being and family dynamics.

Third, the sample was limited to pupils from Makindye Division in Kampala District, Uganda, which may not be representative of children from rural or other urban areas in the country. Therefore, the findings may not be generalizable to all Ugandan children.

Additionally, while the study focused on authoritarian parenting, it did not explore the potential effects of other parenting styles in depth, such as permissive or authoritative parenting, which could provide a more comprehensive understanding of parenting impacts. Finally, the study did not account for potential confounding variables, such as socioeconomic status or external environmental factors, which could also influence academic performance and psychological well-being.

Future research should address these limitations by expanding the sample size, using longitudinal designs, and considering additional contextual factors to provide a more nuanced understanding of the issue.

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