

Original Article**Analysis of parenting patterns on the social and emotional development of children aged 4-5 years****Ayu Novira Damayanti¹, Rifzul Maulina²**¹Coordinator Midwifery at Lelilef Community Health Center, Indonesia²Department of Midwifery, Institute of Technology, Science, and Health RS dr Soepraoen, Indonesia**Abstract:**

Social-emotional development is a critical aspect of early childhood growth and can be influenced by various family-related factors, particularly parenting practices. This study aimed to examine the association between parenting styles and social-emotional development among children aged 4–5 years in the service area of the Lelilef Community Health Center, Indonesia. A correlational analytic study with a cross-sectional design was conducted. The study population comprised parents of children aged 4–5 years, with 33 respondents selected through simple random sampling. Parenting style was assessed as the independent variable, while children's social-emotional development served as the dependent variable. Data were analyzed using Spearman's rank correlation test. The findings indicated that 21.2% of parents who applied an authoritarian parenting style had children categorized as having very good social-emotional development. Statistical analysis revealed a significant association between parenting style and children's social-emotional development ($p = 0.018$; $\alpha = 0.05$). These results suggest that parenting style is significantly related to social-emotional development among children aged 4–5 years. The study highlights the importance of appropriate parenting practices in supporting optimal social-emotional development during early childhood.

Keywords:

early childhood, family factors, parenting style, preschool children, social-emotional development

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**INTRODUCTION**

Early childhood is a critical period of human development, marked by rapid physical, cognitive, emotional, and social growth (Likhar et al., 2022). During this stage, children acquire fundamental skills that form the basis for future learning, behavior, and well-being. The first five years of life are particularly important because developmental processes occurring during this period have long-term implications for health, educational attainment, and social adjustment (Black et al., 2022). Consequently, promoting optimal child development has become a major public health priority worldwide. In Indonesia, child health and development are considered key indicators of national health development achievements. The Indonesian Ministry of Health emphasizes that health

development is an integral component of holistic human development, encompassing efforts to improve child health from the prenatal period through early childhood. These efforts aim not only to ensure child survival but also to maximize children's potential for physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development in accordance with their genetic capacities (Saripuddin et al., 2025).

Among the various developmental domains, social-emotional development plays a particularly significant role in determining children's ability to interact effectively with others and adapt to their environment (Kaizar & Alordiah, 2023). Social-emotional development refers to the process through which children learn to understand and regulate emotions, establish positive relationships, demonstrate empathy, cooperate with peers, and comply with social norms and expectations. Adequate social-emotional development during early childhood contributes to positive mental health outcomes, improved academic readiness, enhanced social competence, and greater resilience in later life (Nawaz, 2024). Conversely, delays or difficulties in social-emotional development may lead to behavioral problems, poor peer relationships, emotional dysregulation, and challenges in educational settings (Kurniyawan et al., 2023). Therefore, understanding factors that influence social-emotional development is essential for developing effective interventions that support healthy child development.

In Indonesia, standards for early childhood development have been established through the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture No. 137 of 2014 concerning National Standards for Early Childhood Education (Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, 2014). According to this regulation, children aged 4–5 years are expected to demonstrate social-emotional competencies such as understanding rules and discipline, showing independence in selecting activities, sharing and helping peers, participating enthusiastically in cooperative and competitive play, and expressing empathy toward others. The achievement of these developmental milestones reflects children's readiness to engage successfully in social and educational environments (Hosokawa et al., 2024). However, not all children reach these milestones at the expected age, highlighting the need to identify determinants of developmental outcomes.

One of the most influential factors affecting children's social-emotional development is the family environment, particularly parenting practices. Parenting style refers to the consistent pattern of attitudes, behaviors, and strategies that parents use to raise and interact with their children (Tsela et al., 2022). Parenting practices shape children's experiences, influence their emotional security, and contribute significantly to personality formation and behavioral development. Baumrind's parenting framework classifies parenting styles into four major categories: authoritative (democratic), authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful. Authoritative parenting is characterized by warmth, responsiveness, and reasonable control; authoritarian parenting emphasizes strict discipline and obedience; permissive parenting provides warmth but limited behavioral regulation; while neglectful parenting is marked by low responsiveness and limited involvement (Fuentes et al., 2022). Each parenting style creates a unique developmental environment that may positively or negatively influence children's emotional and social competencies.

Previous studies have demonstrated that parenting styles are closely associated with various developmental outcomes in children. Authoritative parenting has generally been linked to positive social competence, emotional regulation, self-confidence, and academic achievement. In contrast, authoritarian and neglectful parenting styles have often been associated with increased behavioral problems, lower social competence, and difficulties in emotional adjustment (Yusnitasari et al.,

2024). Nevertheless, findings may vary across cultural contexts due to differences in family structures, social norms, and parenting expectations. Therefore, research examining the relationship between parenting styles and child development within specific sociocultural settings remains important.

The prevalence of developmental problems among children continues to be a public health concern. The Indonesian Pediatric Society estimated that approximately 5–10% of children experience developmental delays, while around 1–3% of children under five years of age experience general developmental disorders (Anniza et al., 2022). Furthermore, data from the East Java Provincial Health Office indicated that a substantial proportion of preschool-aged children experience developmental challenges affecting motor, language, personal-social, and independence domains. Similarly, reports from the Kediri District Health Office showed that a considerable number of children exhibited developmental outcomes below expected standards. These findings suggest that developmental problems remain prevalent and require continued attention from healthcare providers, educators, and families.

The role of parents, particularly mothers as primary caregivers, becomes increasingly important during the preschool years. During this period, children spend a significant amount of time interacting with family members, making parental behavior a major source of social learning. Through daily interactions, children observe, imitate, and internalize emotional responses, communication patterns, and social behaviors demonstrated by their parents. Consequently, parenting practices influence how children develop self-regulation, empathy, cooperation, and interpersonal skills. Given the critical role of parenting in child development, identifying parenting styles associated with favorable social-emotional outcomes can provide valuable guidance for family-based interventions and early childhood development programs (Kurniyawan et al., 2025).

A preliminary assessment conducted at the Lelilef Community Health Center revealed concerns regarding children's social-emotional development. Interviews with teachers and parents indicated that several children demonstrated developmental difficulties relative to age-appropriate expectations (Putri et al., 2025). Teachers reported challenges related to peer interaction, social adaptation, concentration, and participation in group activities. Observations of kindergarten students further identified children who were reluctant to socialize independently, required parental accompaniment during school activities, had trouble maintaining attention during learning tasks, and displayed limited enthusiasm for cooperative play (Depeau et al., 2023). Such findings suggest that social-emotional developmental concerns exist within the study setting and warrant further investigation.

Although numerous studies have examined parenting and child development, evidence regarding the relationship between parenting styles and social-emotional development among preschool-aged children in the Lelilef area remains limited. Understanding this relationship is important for informing community health promotion strategies and supporting parents in adopting effective child-rearing practices. Therefore, this study aimed to analyze the association between parenting styles and social-emotional development among children aged 4–5 years in the working area of the Lelilef Community Health Center. The findings are expected to contribute to the growing body of evidence on early childhood development and provide practical implications for parents, educators, and healthcare professionals seeking to optimize children's social-emotional well-being.

METHOD

Study Design and Setting

This study employed a quantitative cross-sectional correlational design to examine the association between parenting styles and social-emotional development among preschool-aged children. A cross-sectional approach was used to assess the study variables at a single point in time and to identify associations within the target population.

The study was conducted in the working area of the Lelilef Community Health Center (UPTD) in Indonesia. The target population comprised parents or primary caregivers of children aged 4–5 years who were registered within the health center's service area during the study period.

Participants and Sampling

A total of 33 parent–child pairs participated in the study. Participants were selected using simple random sampling. A sampling frame was established from available records at the community health center and affiliated early childhood education institutions, and eligible participants were randomly selected until the required sample was reached.

Parents or primary caregivers were eligible if they (1) cared for a child aged 4–5 years, (2) were willing to participate, and (3) were able to complete the questionnaire. Parents who were unavailable during data collection or submitted incomplete responses were excluded from the analysis.

Variables and Measures

The independent variable was parenting style, defined as the characteristic pattern of parental attitudes, behaviors, and interactions used to raise and guide children. Parenting style was categorized as authoritative (democratic), authoritarian, permissive, or neglectful, reflecting differences in parental responsiveness, communication, supervision, discipline, and emotional support.

The dependent variable was children's social-emotional development, defined as the child's ability to understand and regulate emotions, interact positively with others, demonstrate empathy and cooperation, follow social rules, and develop age-appropriate independence. Assessment was based on developmental indicators for children aged 4–5 years, in accordance with national early childhood development standards.

Data were collected using structured questionnaires administered to parents. The parenting-style questionnaire assessed parental warmth, control, communication, discipline, supervision, and responsiveness and was used to classify the dominant parenting style. Children's social-emotional development was assessed using a standardized developmental questionnaire adapted for preschool-aged children, covering emotional expression, self-regulation, social interaction, empathy, cooperation, independence, and compliance with age-appropriate rules. Before data collection, the instruments were reviewed for clarity, relevance, and suitability for the study population.

Data Collection

Data collection commenced after obtaining permission from the relevant health authorities and the management of Lelilef Community Health Center. Eligible participants received information about the study objectives, procedures, potential benefits, confidentiality, and the voluntary nature of participation. Written informed consent was obtained before participation. Participants completed the questionnaires individually in a designated setting. Trained researchers were available to clarify questionnaire procedures without influencing participants' responses. Completed questionnaires were checked for completeness and consistency before data entry.

Statistical Analysis

Data were analyzed using statistical software. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize participant characteristics, parenting-style categories, and levels of social-emotional development. Frequencies and percentages were reported for categorical variables, while means and standard deviations were calculated where appropriate. The association between parenting style and children's social-emotional development was examined using Spearman's rank correlation test. This non-parametric test was selected because the study variables were measured on ordinal scales. Statistical significance was set at $\alpha = 0.05$, with $p < 0.05$ considered statistically significant.

Ethical Considerations

Participation was voluntary, and participants were informed of their right to withdraw without consequences. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained using identification codes rather than personal identifiers. Data were used solely for research purposes and stored securely with access restricted to the research team. The study adhered to applicable ethical standards for research involving human participants and respected participants' rights, dignity, and privacy.

RESULT

Table 1 presents the characteristics of the children and their mothers. Among the children, the largest proportion was aged 4 years (13, 39.4%), and 17 (51.5%) were male. Regarding maternal characteristics, most mothers were aged 20–35 years (14, 42.4%), had completed junior high school (14, 42.4%), and were employed (18, 54.5%).

Table 2 shows a statistically significant positive association between parenting styles and the social-emotional development of children aged 4–5 years ($p = 0.680$, $p = 0.018$). The correlation coefficient indicates a strong positive association, suggesting that more favorable parenting styles were associated with better social-emotional development. Because this study used a cross-sectional design, the findings should be interpreted as associations rather than causal effects.

Table 1. Characteristics of Children and Their Mothers at Lelilef Community Health Center (n = 33)

Characteristic	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Child's age (years)	4	13	39.4
	4.5	12	36.4
	5	8	24.2
Child's sex	Male	17	51.5
	Female	16	48.5
Mother's age (years)	<20	8	24.2
	20–35	14	42.4
	>35	11	33.3
Mother's education	Elementary school	8	24.2
	Junior high school	14	42.4
	Senior high school	8	24.2
	Bachelor's degree	3	9.1
Mother's occupation	Unemployed	15	45.5
	Employed	18	54.5

Table 2. Association Between Parenting Styles and Social-Emotional Development Among Children Aged 4–5 Years (n = 33)

Variables	Spearman's ρ	p-value
Parenting styles – Social-emotional development	0.680	0.018

DISCUSSION

The present study examined the association between parenting styles and social-emotional development among children aged 4–5 years in the working area of the Lelilef Community Health Center. The findings revealed a statistically significant relationship between parenting style and children's social-emotional development ($p = 0.018$), with a positive correlation coefficient ($r = 0.680$), indicating a moderately strong association. These findings suggest that variations in parenting practices are closely related to differences in social-emotional developmental outcomes among preschool-aged children.

The descriptive analysis showed that authoritarian parenting was the most frequently reported parenting style among respondents. This finding reflects the persistence of relatively strict parenting approaches within many families, where parents emphasize obedience, discipline, and adherence to established rules (Arzeen & Arzeen, 2023). According to parenting theory, authoritarian parenting is characterized by high levels of parental control and relatively low responsiveness, with children expected to comply with parental demands without extensive negotiation or explanation. Such parenting practices are often influenced by cultural values that prioritize respect for authority, family hierarchy, and behavioral conformity.

Despite the predominance of authoritarian parenting, a considerable proportion of children in this study demonstrated very good social-emotional development. This finding may indicate that the influence of parenting style on child development is more complex than a simple classification of parenting categories. Previous studies have suggested that the effects of parenting styles may vary across cultural contexts, family structures, socioeconomic conditions, parental education, and the

quality of parent-child relationships (Yim, 2022). In collectivist societies, for example, certain aspects of authoritarian parenting may be interpreted by children as expressions of parental concern, guidance, and protection rather than purely restrictive control. Consequently, parenting practices that are traditionally classified as authoritarian may not always produce adverse developmental outcomes.

The significant relationship identified in this study supports ecological and developmental theories emphasizing the crucial role of the family environment in shaping children's social-emotional competencies. During the preschool years, children acquire emotional regulation skills, empathy, cooperation, self-control, and interpersonal communication primarily through interactions with parents and other family members. Parents serve as children's first socialization agents, providing behavioral models that influence how children interpret emotions, respond to social situations, and develop relationships with others (Sofri et al., 2025). Therefore, parenting practices that provide guidance, structure, emotional support, and consistent expectations may contribute positively to children's social-emotional adjustment.

The findings are consistent with previous research demonstrating that parenting behaviors significantly influence children's social competence and emotional development (Laugen et al., 2024). Studies have reported that positive parent-child interactions are associated with higher levels of emotional regulation, empathy, social responsibility, and peer acceptance. Similarly, another research reported that early emotional competencies contribute to later academic and social success, highlighting the importance of fostering social-emotional skills during the preschool period (Hosokawa et al., 2024; Korucu et al., 2022). Children who develop effective emotional regulation are generally better equipped to establish positive peer relationships, participate in cooperative activities, and adapt successfully to educational environments.

From a developmental perspective, social-emotional competence is closely linked to emotional intelligence. Children who can recognize and manage their emotions effectively are more likely to demonstrate empathy, cooperate with peers, resolve conflicts constructively, and engage in positive social interactions. Emotional regulation serves as a foundation for social competence because children must first understand and control their own emotions before responding appropriately to others' emotions. Consequently, family environments that encourage emotional expression, supportive communication, and constructive problem-solving may facilitate healthy social-emotional development.

The relatively strong correlation observed in this study suggests that parenting practices may represent an important factor influencing developmental outcomes during early childhood. However, parenting style should not be viewed as the sole determinant of social-emotional development. Children's developmental trajectories are shaped by multiple interacting factors, including temperament, parental education, socioeconomic status, family relationships, educational experiences, peer interactions, and community support systems. Therefore, the observed association should be interpreted within the broader ecological context of child development.

These findings have important practical implications for parents, educators, and healthcare professionals. Parents should be encouraged to adopt parenting practices that balance behavioral guidance with emotional responsiveness. Consistent supervision, open communication, emotional support, and opportunities for age-appropriate independence can help children develop social

competence and emotional maturity. Early childhood educators can further support these developmental processes by creating learning environments that promote cooperation, empathy, self-regulation, and positive peer interactions. Community health centers may also play a role in providing parenting education programs to strengthen parents' knowledge and skills in child development.

Several limitations should be considered when interpreting the results of this study. First, the cross-sectional design limits the ability to establish causal relationships between parenting styles and social-emotional development. The findings demonstrate an association but cannot determine whether parenting practices directly cause developmental outcomes. Second, the relatively small sample size may limit the generalizability of the findings to broader populations. Third, data were collected via parent-reported questionnaires, which may be subject to recall and social desirability biases. Future studies should employ larger samples, longitudinal designs, and multiple assessment methods to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between parenting practices and children's developmental outcomes.

Overall, the findings indicate that parenting style is significantly associated with social-emotional development among children aged 4–5 years. Given the critical role of early childhood experiences in shaping future developmental trajectories, interventions that promote positive parenting practices may substantially improve children's social-emotional well-being and long-term developmental outcomes.

CONCLUSION

This study found that authoritarian parenting was the most reported parenting style among parents of children aged 4–5 years, while a substantial proportion of children demonstrated very good social-emotional development. Statistical analysis revealed a significant positive association between parenting style and children's social-emotional development. These findings highlight the important role of family parenting practices in shaping social-emotional outcomes during early childhood. However, given the cross-sectional nature of the study, the results should be interpreted as associations rather than causal relationships. The findings underscore the need for parents, educators, and healthcare providers to promote supportive parenting practices that foster children's emotional regulation, social competence, and adaptive behavior. Future studies with larger sample sizes and longitudinal designs are recommended to further clarify the influence of parenting styles on children's social-emotional development across diverse cultural and family contexts.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There is no conflict of interest.

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