

The Relationship Between Parenting Styles and Temper Tantrums in Preschool Children (Aged 4-6 Years)

Lina Madyastuti Rahayuningrum¹, Yuanita Syaiful², A. Maya Rupa Anjeli³, Yulanticha Diaz A.A⁴

¹²³⁴Faculty of Health Science, Muhammadiyah Gresik University, Gresik

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ABSTRACT

Parenting style refers to a parent's ability to provide the time, attention, and support necessary for a child to achieve optimal physical, mental, and social growth and development. If parenting practices are inadequate, children may experience temper tantrums. This study aimed to examine the relationship between parenting styles and temper tantrums in preschool-aged children. A cross-sectional study design was employed using purposive sampling, involving 62 pairs of mothers and their children. Parenting style served as the independent variable, while temper tantrums served as the dependent variable. Data were collected via questionnaires. Statistical analysis using the Spearman Rank Test yielded a p-value of 0.036 and a correlation coefficient (r) of 0.266, indicating a weak correlation between parenting styles and temper tantrums in preschool-aged children. To address temper tantrums, parents should play an active role in child-rearing by setting a positive example and guiding their children in ways that prevent high-intensity temper tantrums.

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Corresponding Author:

Lina Madyastuti Rahayuningrum

Faculty of Health Science, Muhammadiyah Gresik University

Email: rosemaleenna.8@umg.ac.id

1. INTRODUCTION

Parenting is a continuous process of interaction between parent and child that encompasses how parents provide attention, affection, guidance, and discipline, as well as how they instill values and norms to support the child's optimal growth and development (1). A child's socio-emotional development involves the ability to recognize and manage emotions, build positive relationships with others, demonstrate prosocial behavior, and develop social competence—all of which serve as the foundation for future mental health and academic success. Family factors, parenting styles, and the school environment play crucial roles in this development (2). Temper tantrums are outbursts of negative emotion that occur suddenly and are disproportionate to the trigger. Among preschool-aged children, tantrums are generally considered a normal part of developing emotional regulation. However, tantrums that are excessively frequent, prolonged, or accompanied by aggressive behavior may indicate underlying emotional developmental disorders or future psychopathology (3).

Children may experience temper tantrums because their abilities to regulate emotions and control their behavior (self-regulation) have not yet fully developed. During the toddler and preschool years (ages 1-5), children are still learning to recognize, express, and manage their emotions. When their desires are unmet, or when they feel frustrated, tired, or hungry—or struggle to articulate their feelings—children tend to express their emotions through outbursts or temper tantrums (3).

The consequences of temper tantrums depend on their frequency, intensity, and duration, as well as how parents or caregivers respond to them. Occasional temper tantrums are a normal part of development for children aged 1-5. However, if tantrums occur too frequently, last for a long time, or are accompanied by aggressive behavior, they can lead to various issues, such as impairments in emotional and social development, behavioral problems, risks to mental health, learning difficulties, strain on family relationships, and the risk of injury (3).

According to (4), parenting style refers to the pattern of interaction between parent and child—specifically, the parents' attitudes and behaviors during interactions. This encompasses how they enforce rules, instill values or norms, provide attention and affection, and model positive attitudes and behaviors for their children to emulate. Regarding social and emotional development, (5) notes that children begin to learn how to manage their own emotions—a process often referred to as self-regulation. Children start learning to manage their emotions and behaviors, delay gratification, and build positive relationships with others. (6) also highlights common issues among preschool-aged children, namely disobedience and temper tantrums. Information gathered in October 2023 from teachers at DWP Kedayang Kindergarten in Gresik—which had a total of 74 students—revealed instances of temper tantrums in both Group A and Group B. Interviews with ten mothers waiting for their children showed that five (50%) employed an authoritarian parenting style, three (30%) used a permissive style, and two (20%) practiced a democratic style. According (7), temper tantrums often arise from a lack of parental supervision; although parents may have the ability to redirect a child's attention during a tantrum, they are sometimes unable to prevent the outburst entirely, as a child's nature and behavior are heavily influenced by their parents' parenting style. However, the specific relationship between parenting styles and temper tantrums has not yet been fully explained.

Research on preschool children with behavioral disorders found that the average duration of a tantrum is 3.4 minutes, with a range of 0.2 to 26.5 minutes. Most tantrums are mild in intensity. The most common cause is non-compliance with rules (52%) (8).

A longitudinal study conducted by Mouton (9) involving 861 children aged 1-5 years showed that most children experience temper tantrums once or twice a month. Tantrum frequency decreases with age. Children aged 1-3 years generally experience tantrums lasting 1-5 minutes, whereas children aged 4-5 years more frequently experience tantrums lasting 6-10 minutes. Tantrums lasting longer than 30 minutes are very rare (<3%) and warrant further attention.

A preliminary survey was conducted by the researcher at DWP Kindergarten in Kedayang, Gresik, in October 2024, involving 74 students aged 4 to 6 years. Information from teachers indicated that children experiencing tantrums were found in both Group A and Group B. Interviews with 10 mothers accompanying their children revealed that 5 (50%) employed an authoritarian parenting style, which hindered the children's emotional development. Meanwhile, 3 (30%) employed a permissive parenting style, resulting in a lack of emotional control in the children. The remaining 2 (20%) employed a democratic parenting style; this approach fostered the children's willingness to develop based on their own abilities, demonstrating that good self-control can reduce the occurrence of temper tantrums.

Parenting styles can lead to temper tantrums in preschool children and are closely related to the child's emotional development. According to (10), authoritarian parenting will produce children who are fearful, quiet, lack initiative, like to rebel, like to break norms and have a weak personality. Preschool children are already able to express emotions with words, but if the parenting style is coercive and always demands obedience from the child, so that they behave as desired, there will be obstacles in the child's emotional development. Democratic parenting will produce children who are independent, can control themselves, have good relationships with friends and have an interest in new things. This democratic parenting style helps children to develop themselves based on their abilities, so that good self-control in children can reduce their

temper tantrums (11). Permissive parenting will produce children who are impulsive, aggressive, disobedient, spoiled, lack independence, want to win alone, lack self-confidence, and are less socially mature. Children should already be aware of behavioral rules in certain situations and different circumstances, but children with permissive parenting styles will have a tendency to have things as a necessity. Parents do not instill discipline and minimal communication between parents and children, so if not met, children will express their anger with temper tantrums. The impact of temper tantrums that cannot be resolved appears in adolescence or adulthood, resulting in antisocial behavior that is repeated and difficult to change (12).

Authoritative (democratic) parenting is the most effective style because it combines reasonable control with parental warmth and responsiveness. Children raised under this style tend to exhibit better emotional regulation, social competence, and self-control. Brooks explains that for optimal social and emotional development, parents need to provide affection, attention, and consistent discipline, while also serving as role models. This concept aligns with Baumrind's theory (13) of democratic parenting (14). Based on this background, the researcher is interested in investigating the relationship between parenting styles and temper tantrums in preschool-aged children (4-6 years old).

2. METHOD

This research method uses Cross Sectional, Each research subject is only observed once and measurements are made on the character or variables of the subject at the time of examination. In this study, the researcher aims to determine the relationship between parenting patterns and temper tantrums in preschool children (4-6 years old) at TK DWP Kedanyang Gresik.

The population in this study were all 74 mothers of students at TK DWP Kedanyang Gresik. In this study, the sample was mothers of students at DWP Kindergarten Kedanyang Gresik, who met the inclusion and exclusion criteria. The inclusion criteria for mothers in this study were: 1) mothers willing to be respondents. 2) mothers whose children were indicated to have temper tantrums. The exclusion criteria for mothers in this study were: 1) mothers experiencing mental disorders. 2) mothers experiencing chronic physical illnesses. The sampling in this study used purposive sampling which was determined based on the inclusion criteria as desired by the researcher and previously known population characteristics. Based on the calculation of the sample size, the sample size was 62 mother respondents. The independent variable in this study was parenting patterns. The dependent variable in this study was temper tantrums. Data collection was carried out using a questionnaire instrument: 1) parenting patterns were measured using a questionnaire. This instrument was taken based on Baumrind's theory (13) in Santrock, (10). 2) Temper Tantrum was measured using a questionnaire. This instrument was taken based on the theory (15). The research was conducted at TK DWP Kedanyang Gresik on March, 2024.

The collected data is grouped and coded according to the provisions set by the researcher, then transferred into a table according to the variables to be measured. After the tabulation process, to determine the relationships between the variables used the Spearman Rank statistical test with a significance limit of $p < 0.05$ which means there is a relationship between the measured variables (H1 is accepted and H0 is rejected). If $p > 0.05$ which means there is no significant relationship between the 2 measured variables (H0 is accepted H1 is rejected).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Parenting Styles in Preschool Children (Aged 4-6 Years) at TK DWP Kedanyang

Table 1 Parenting Style in Preschool Children (Aged 4-6 Years) at TK DWP Kedanyang

No.	Parenting Styles	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Authoritarian	9	14.5 %
2.	Permissive	27	43.5 %
3.	Democratic	26	41.9 %
	Jumlah	62	100 %

Table 1 shows the results of a study on parenting patterns for children at TK DWP Kedayang, with 62 respondents, of which less than half used a permissive parenting pattern (27 respondents (43.5%). A small proportion used an authoritarian parenting pattern (9 respondents (14.5%).

Parenting style is a pattern of parental behavior applied to children that is relative and consistent over time, can be felt by children in both negative and positive aspects (11). Parenting styles are divided into 3 (10). Authoritarian parenting, parents tend to set standards that must be absolutely followed, usually accompanied by threats. Permissive parenting, children develop a feeling that other aspects of their parents' lives are more important than themselves. Democratic parenting, focuses more on the educational aspect than the punishment aspect, providing an explanation of the reasons for the punishment and rewards. Less than half of the parenting styles are permissive, as many as 27 respondents (43.6%). Parents provide very loose supervision, giving their children the opportunity to do things without sufficient supervision from them. Factors influencing parenting styles : 1) Age of parents: more than half are in the group over 30 years old, as many as 37 respondents (59.7%). Those aged 30 and above are considered young and productive, and they tend to adopt a democratic and permissive parenting style compared to older people.

A small number of parents—9 respondents (14.5%)—employed an authoritarian parenting style. In this style, parents tend to set absolute standards that must be obeyed, often accompanied by threats. Factors influencing parenting styles include: 1) Socioeconomic status: more than half of the families (35 respondents or 56%) had an income between IDR 1,500,000 and IDR 3,000,000; parents from lower-middle-class backgrounds tend to be more authoritarian and coercive than those from upper-middle-class backgrounds. 2) Child's age: more than half of the children (34 or 54.8%) were 6 years old; authoritarian parenting is often used with young children because they may not grasp complex explanations, leading parents to rely on authoritarian control.

Parents are expected to adopt appropriate parenting styles, as each style has its own strengths and weaknesses; in practice, parents may employ a democratic approach, yet at times be permissive or authoritarian, depending on the specific situation and circumstances. The optimal approach is democratic parenting, in which parents guide and direct their children by granting them responsible freedom and listening to their opinions, while taking the child's personality into account. All symbols used in the equations should be defined in the text that follows.

3.2. Temper tantrum in Preschool Children (Aged 4-6 Years) at TK DWP Kedayang

Tabel 2. *Temper Tantrum* in Preschool Children (Aged 4-6 Years) at TK DWP Kedayang

No.	<i>Temper tantrum</i>	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Mild	11	17.7 %
2.	Moderate	33	53, 2 %
3.	Severe	18	29 %
	Jumlah	62	100 %

Table 2 presents the results of the study on temper tantrums among 62 children at DWP Kedayang Kindergarten: 33 children (53.3%) experienced moderate temper tantrums, while a small proportion—11 children (17.7%)—experienced mild-level temper tantrums.

A temper tantrum is an explosive and uncontrolled outburst of emotion. Often occurring in children aged 15 months to 6 years, temper tantrums are part of the developmental process—a period of physical, cognitive, and emotional development

Thirty-three children (53.3%)—representing less than half of the total—experienced moderate temper tantrums. These findings were derived from a questionnaire based on Zaviera's (2008) (15) theory regarding temper tantrum manifestations according to age: 1) Age 4: stomping feet, screaming, punching, slamming doors, criticizing, and whining. 2) Ages 5-6: the aforementioned behaviors plus swearing, cursing, hitting, self-criticism, intentionally breaking objects, and making threats. Respondents answered questions based on their child's actual behavior; scoring was assigned as follows: 4 for "very often," 3 for "often," 2 for "rarely," and 1 for "never." Finally, the researcher calculated the total score and categorized the temper tantrums as high (76-100%), moderate (55-75%), or low (< 55%)

A small proportion of the children—11 in total (17.7%)—exhibited a low level of temper tantrums. These findings were derived from a questionnaire based on Zaviera (2008) (15) theory regarding temper tantrum manifestations relative to a child's age. 1) Age 4: behaviors such as stomping feet, screaming, punching, slamming doors, criticizing, and whining. 2) Ages 5-6: the aforementioned behaviors plus swearing, cursing, hitting, self-criticism, intentionally breaking objects, and making threats. Respondents answered questions based on their child's actual behavior; the researcher then assigned scores: 4 for "very frequent" occurrence, 3 for "frequent," 2 for "rare," and 1 for "never." Finally, the researcher calculated the total score and categorized the temper tantrum level as high (76-100%), moderate (55-75%), or low (< 55%).

Addressing the issue of temper tantrums requires parents to take preventive measures by setting a good example and guiding their children to understand the value of togetherness and emotional self-regulation, given the crucial role parents play in a child's growth and development. Children look to their parents as role models; at the preschool age, they are not yet trained in responsibility but instead rely on others and lack independence.

3.2 The Relationship Between Parenting Styles and Temper Tantrums in Preschool Children

Table 3 The Relationship Between Parenting Styles and Temper Tantrums in Preschool Children

No.	Pola Asuh	Temper Tantrum						Frequency	%
		Mild	%	Moderate	%	Severage	%		
1.	Authoritarian	2	3,2	5	8,1	2	3,2	9	14,5
2.	Permissive	6	9,7	17	27,4	4	6,5	27	43,5
3.	Democratic	3	4,8	11	17,7	12	19,4	26	41,9
	Jumlah	11	17,7	33	53,2	18	29	62	100
Spearman Rank $\alpha = 0,036$						$r = 0,266$			

The results of the study, using the non-parametric Spearman Rank correlation test, yielded a calculated value of 0.036, indicating a relationship between parenting styles and temper tantrums; the correlation coefficient (r) was 0.266, representing a low level of association.

The results of this study align with the research by (16), which demonstrates a relationship between parenting styles and the occurrence of temper tantrums in preschool-aged children. That study explains that the parenting styles adopted by parents are linked to the emergence of temper tantrums in children. Parenting is defined as the entirety of the ways parents treat their children. Many experts regard parenting as a crucial and fundamental element in preparing children to become good members of society; it essentially refers to the general upbringing and education provided to the child. Parenting constitutes a process of interaction between parent and child. This interaction encompasses care—such as meeting nutritional needs, fostering success, and providing protection—as well as socialization, which involves teaching behaviors that are generally accepted by society.

Parenting styles are a contributing factor to temper tantrums. The way parents raise their children plays a role in causing these outbursts; a child who is overly indulged and always gets what they want may throw a tantrum when a request is refused.

Factors influencing parenting styles : 1) Parental age: more than half of the respondents (37 individuals or 59.7%) were over the age of 30. Parents aged 30 and above fall into the young and productive category; they tend to adopt democratic and permissive parenting styles compared to older parents. 2) Socioeconomic status: more than half of the families (35 respondents or 56%) had an income between IDR 1,500,000 and IDR 3,000,000. Parents from lower-middle socioeconomic backgrounds tend to be more authoritarian and coercive than those from upper-middle backgrounds. 3) Child's age: more than half of the children (34 individuals or 54.8%) were 6 years old; authoritarian parenting is often employed with young children because they may not grasp complex explanations, leading parents to focus on authoritarian control.

The results of the study with a low level of correlation are said to be low because the study of parenting patterns in children at TK DWP Kedanyang with 62 respondents, less than half used permissive parenting patterns with 27 respondents (43.5%), more than half were female with 37 children (60%). This is not in accordance with one of the factors that influence parenting

patterns: 1) Child gender: parents will generally be stricter towards girls than their boys. This means that parents will choose an authoritarian parenting pattern rather than permissive and democratic. Respondents' dishonesty in answering the questions in the questionnaire, so that the data obtained is less subjective, also makes the results of the study with a low level of correlation.

Appropriate parenting styles can help manage temper tantrums in children; each style has its own strengths and weaknesses—for instance, parents who adopt a permissive style tend to be warm and well-liked by their children. Since every child has a unique personality, parents cannot simply apply the same parenting approach to every child. If a child experiences temper tantrums that parents struggle to manage, it is advisable to seek information from child development books or the internet, or even consult a child psychologist if necessary. Additionally, educational institutions could organize seminars featuring psychologists as speakers to help parents understand and address temper tantrums in children.

4. CONCLUSION

Under a permissive parenting style, parents tend not to reprimand or warn their children when they are in danger, and very little guidance is provided. Most of these children experience moderate temper tantrums due to a lack of emotional control. Research indicates a relationship between parenting styles and temper tantrums in preschool-aged children.

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