

Parental Personality and Parenting Style: A Ghanaian Perspective

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Abstract

This study was conducted to investigate the relationship between parental personality and parenting style among Ghanaian parents within the Accra-Metropolis. One hundred and twenty (120) respondents were sampled using purposive and snowball sampling technique and administered the Ten-Item Personality Questionnaire and the Parenting Style Questionnaire. Four hypotheses were tested using both One Way and Two Way Analysis of Variance and the 't' test for independent samples. Analysis of data revealed that Parents with agreeable personality are not more permissive than those with the other personality traits. Conscientious parents were significantly higher than extraversion, and agreeableness but not from neuroticism and openness on authoritative parenting. Male parents were more authoritarian than their female counterparts. No significant difference existed between parents with single child and those with two or more children on permissive parenting in the Ghanaian setting. From the results it is advised that parents must be aware that their personality and parenting style affect the way they raise their children.

Keywords: Parental Personality, Agreeableness, Conscientious, Extraversion, Neuroticism, Openness, Parenting Style, Ghanaian Parents, Accra-Metropolis

Introduction

According to Aunola and Nurmi (2006), there is no magic formula to perfect parenting. If so, then what contributes to the differences in the parenting styles of parents and their eventual consequences on the children? Studies (e.g. Campbell, Shaw & Gilliom, 2000; Nauert, 2011) have suggested that negative parenting (such as when parents expressed negative emotions toward their children, handle them roughly and in an abusive manner often resulted in angrier, hostile/aggressive, deviant and problem children. The hassles in the world today emanating from jobs and other related and unrelated issues have become a great threat to the stability of many people and the family institution. Many are in search of strategies to deal with these stressors. In effect, people may tend to change or deviate slightly from what they used to be since they are now adopting new measures to keep life running. Parents may not have the required time to spend with their children anymore. They are too tired at the end of the day when they must be spending quality time with their children. All these can possibly impact the kind of upbringing parents may give to their children. Therefore, to what extent do parents' personalities influence their style of parenting? This study therefore seeks to unravel the relationship between parental personality and parenting style in the modern day among some Ghanaian parents.

Significantly, school, church and the media forms other sources of socialization and have seriously impacted on the lives of many so that they may no longer succumb to home treatments. That notwithstanding, parents have got a major power to influence the lives of their children. Parenting style from a psychological perspective can be viewed as the benchmark strategy that parents use in their child rearing. Usually, it is affected by both the parents' and children's temperaments, and is largely based on the influence of one's own parents and culture. Most parents learn parenting practices from their own parents (Santrock, 2007). Within the extended family of relatives, parents are advocates for ensuring that children's needs and rights are upheld and respected. This advocacy responsibility extends into the community. Often the styles of child raising adopted by some parents can be very much reflective of their own personality type. Personality is the particular combination of emotional, attitudinal, and behavioural response patterns of an individual (Angler, 2009).

The study of personality started with Hippocrates' four humours that gave rise to four temperaments (Storm, 2006). Personality types and traits have been severally classified by many theorists. However, the important thing is to know how an individual's personality affects his/her behaviour and daily functioning. For parents, their personality may be the source of guidance for their parenting style. Otten, de Vries and Engels (2010) concluded that, the type of personality of a parent significantly reflects on the sort of parenting the parent gives

to their children. Numerous factors contribute to individual differences in parenting behaviour, and parental personality has been assigned a major role by some theorists (Vondra, Sysko, & Belsky, 2005). Given that adult personality is stable over time (Terracciano, Costa, & McCrae, 2006), it has the potential to relate consistently to parenting behaviours. Research has indicated direct links between certain parent personality traits, such as parental psychopathology or negative emotionality, and child behaviour problems (Downey & Coyne, 1990; Kochanska, Murray & Coy, 1997), and an indirect link from parental personality to children's behaviour problems through parenting behaviours (Brook, Whiteman & Zheng, 2002). Empirical evidence corroborates relations between parental personality and parenting behaviours. For example, supportive and nurturing parenting is positively associated with Extraversion and Openness (Metsapelto & Pulkkinen, 2003), Agreeableness (Belsky, Crnic, & Woodworth, 1995) and Conscientiousness (Clark, Horan, Tompkins-Bjorkman, Kovalski & Hackett, 2000; Losoya, Callor & Rowe, 1997), and inversely related to Neuroticism (Metsapelto & Pulkkinen, 2003). In contrast, negative, controlling parenting is positively associated with Neuroticism and inversely related to Agreeableness (Belsky, Houts & Fearon, 1995; Losoya, Callor & Rowe, 1997).

From the above review, many studies explore the types of parenting styles adopted by parents and the influences of various factors on parenting style among parents. However, most of these factors have been external ones other than what exists internally of the parents. Little is known about the extent to which the personality of parents affects how they raise children especially in Sub-Saharan Africa. It is therefore a step in the right direction to conduct a research aimed at unravelling the link between personality of parents and their parenting style.

Objectives of the Study

This study will aim at the following;

- To investigate the relationship between parental personality and parenting style
- To ascertain whether male parents vary in their parenting style compared to their female counterparts.
- To crease out whether the number of children of parents affects their parenting style

Literature Review

Underpinning Theories

Theories of Personality: The Big Five Personality Model (Digman, 1990)

Many contemporary personality psychologists believe that there are five basic dimensions of personality, often referred to as the "Big 5" personality traits. Previous trait theorist had suggested various numbers of possible traits, including Gordon Allport's list of 4,000 personality traits, Raymond Cattell's 16 personality factors and Hans Eysenck's three-factor theory. However, many researchers felt that Cattell's theory was too complex and Eysenck's was too limited in scope. As a result, the five-factor theory emerged to describe the basic traits that serve as the building blocks of personality. Today, many researchers believe that there are five core personality traits. Evidence of this theory has been growing over the past 50 years, beginning with the research of Fiske (1949) and later expanded upon by other researchers including Norman (1967), Goldberg (1981), and McCrae & Costa (1987). The Big Five factors are: Openness (inventive/curious vs. consistent/cautious), an appreciation for art, emotion, adventure, unusual ideas, curiosity, and variety of experience. Openness reflects the degree of intellectual curiosity, creativity and a preference for novelty and variety; Conscientiousness (efficient/organized vs. easy-going/careless), a tendency to show self-discipline, act dutifully, and aim for achievement; planned rather than spontaneous behaviour, organized, and dependable; Extraversion (outgoing/energetic vs. solitary/reserved), energy, positive emotions, assertiveness, sociability and the tendency to seek stimulation in the company of others, and talkativeness; Agreeableness (friendly/compassionate vs. cold/unkind), a tendency to be compassionate and cooperative rather than suspicious and antagonistic towards others and Neuroticism (sensitive/nervous vs. secure/confident), the tendency to experience unpleasant emotions easily, such as anger, anxiety, depression, or vulnerability. Neuroticism also refers to the degree of emotional stability and impulse control, and is sometimes referred by its low pole – emotional stability. The Big Five model is a comprehensive,

empirical, data-driven research finding (Digman, 1990). Identifying the traits and structure of human personality has been one of the most fundamental goals in all of psychology. The five broad factors were discovered and defined by several independent sets of researchers (Digman, 1990). These five overarching domains have been found to contain and subsume most known personality traits and are assumed to represent the basic structure behind all personality traits (O'Connor, 2002). These five factors provide a rich conceptual framework for integrating all the research findings and theory in personality psychology.

Theories of Parenting Style

Parenting styles vary and they are often the results of one's culture and the way one has been parented. In the 1960's developmental psychologist Diana Baumrind conducted a study on pre-school aged children. Her study led her to develop a popular theory of parenting styles in which she identified three different parenting styles. Later (in the 1980's) a fourth was added to her theory (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). The four parenting styles include the following. Authoritarian Parenting: Authoritarian parents establish strict rules that they expect to be followed without question. To Baumrind (1991), these parents are obedient and status-oriented, and expect their orders to be obeyed without explanation. Authoritative Parents also establish rules that they expect to be followed. But unlike their Authoritarian counterparts, these parents are more democratic in their approach. They accept questions and when their children do not follow rules rather than punishing them they are more nurturing. According to Baumrind (1991), their disciplinary methods are supportive rather than punitive. Permissive Parents: Permissive parents make few demands of their children. They would prefer to adopt the role of a friend rather than a parent. They rarely discipline their children and have low expectations of them. Uninvolved Parents fulfils the child's basic needs but otherwise remains generally detached from the child's life. But the reality is most parents do not fit one category in every situation.

Related Studies

Although there is a body of research on adult personality and its impact on adult behavioural and social functioning, few studies have investigated the role of parental personality in parenting practices (Belsky & Barends, 2002; Clark et al., 2000). Parental personality was proposed as an important determinant of parenting (Belsky, 1984). Associations have been found between personality and parenting of children (Belsky et al., 1995; Clark et al., 2000; Metsäpelto & Pulkkinen, 2003, Prinzie, Onghena, Hellinckx, Grietens, Ghesquiere & Colpin, 2004). Generally, emotional stability (reverse of neuroticism), openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness were positively associated with parental positive control and support and negatively with negative control. Extraversion was associated with more negative control (e.g., Clark et al., 2000), but in contrast also with more warm and supportive behaviour (e.g., Mangelsdorf, Ong, Dyck, & Evans, 1990). Otten, de Vries and Engels (2010) attested that parental personality traits play a role in parenting behaviours with his 688 Dutch parents of adolescents in the SMILE study drawing on the Big Five personality traits. Regression analyses were used to determine which personality traits were associated with parenting dimensions and styles. As regards dimensions, the two aspects of personality reflecting interpersonal interactions (extraversion and agreeableness) were related to supportiveness. Emotional stability was associated with lower strict control. As regards parenting styles, extraverted, agreeable, and less emotionally stable individuals were most likely to be authoritative parents. Conscientiousness and openness did not relate to general parenting, but might be associated with more content-specific acts of parenting. Aunola and Nurmi (2006) also investigated the combination of mothers' and fathers' parenting styles (affection, behavioural control, and psychological control) that would be most influential in predicting their children's internal and external problem behaviours. They found that a high level of psychological control exercised by mothers combined with high affection predicted increases in the levels of both internal and external problem behaviours among children. Behavioural control exercised by mothers decreased children's external problem behaviour but only when combined with a low level of psychological control. Querido, Warner and Eyberg (2002) study revealed the number of children in a family do affect the parenting style significantly and that authoritative parenting style was most predictive of fewer child behaviour problems. Oliver, Guerin and Coffman (2009) in their study highlighted that parental conscientiousness as a personality trait related to parents' ease in setting limits in their parental role and corroborate the significant relation between limit setting as a parental behaviour potentially facilitating adolescents' behavioural adjustment. For both parents, parenting behaviours related to their adolescent's externalizing behaviour problems. Karreman, van Tuijl, van Aken and Deković (2008) found weak link between personality and observed parenting. Effortful control appeared to moderate the relation between parental personality and parenting: fathers' neuroticism was

positively associated with fathers' positive control and fathers' extraversion was positively associated with fathers' negative control, but only when children had a low level of effortful control. Thus, individual differences in personality appeared to be most relevant during the demanding experience of parenting a less self-regulated child. Azizi and Besharat (2011) conducted a study with the aim of examining the relationship among dimensions of perfectionism including self-oriented, other-oriented, and socially prescribed perfectionism with parenting styles including authoritative, authoritarian and permissive styles in a sample of Iranian families. Eight hundred parents (400 mothers, 400 fathers) were included in this study. All participants were asked to complete the Tehran Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (TMPS) (Besharat, 2007) and the Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ; Buri, 1991). The results revealed that dimensions of parental perfectionism were associated with parenting styles. It can be concluded that dimensions of parents' perfectionism would influence their parenting styles. From the foregoing literature, it is obvious that a strong link exists between parental personality and parenting style.

People are born with many predispositions; when they grow, they tend to learn many other things from the environment in which they find themselves. Personality traits are thus formed and modified extensively in the course of their lives. There seems to be much literature on parenting personality and parenting style. However, most of these literatures come from the west. The question of applicability to the African setting remains virgin as not much empirical attention has been given to this area. It is envisioned that findings in a collectivistic cultural setting may provide an added view divergent of what is known from the individualistic cultures. The present study aimed at unravelling the link between personality of parents and their parenting style in the Ghanaian setting.

Statement of Hypotheses

- Parents with agreeable personality will be more permissive than those with the other personality traits.
- Conscientious parents will be more authoritative than those with other personality traits.
- Male parents will be more authoritarian than female parents.
- Parents with a single child will be more permissive than those with more than one child

Operational Definition of Terms

Agreeable personality- the tendency to be compassionate and cooperative rather than suspicious and antagonistic towards others

Conscientious personality- the tendency to show self-discipline, act dutifully, and aim for achievement; planned rather than spontaneous behaviour, organized, and dependable

Authoritative parenting- parents with supportive disciplinary methods rather than punitive ones

Authoritarian parenting- parents who establish strict rules that they expect to be followed without questioning

Permissive parenting- parents who rarely discipline their children and have low expectations of them

Method

Population

The setting of this study was the Ga-East Municipality of the Accra-Metropolis. The population was all parents within the Ga-East Municipality. This population was selected because of availability and the extent to which the level of education of participants will enable them to read and comprehend the set of questions given to them. More so, per their education, it was expected that such people will adopt some commonly accepted parenting

style. This population consisted of both working parents and schooling parents (as there were a number of public and private tertiary institutions within the selected setting).

Participants and Criteria for Selection

From the above population, a sample of one hundred and twenty (120) was used for the study. This sample consisted of males and females; students and workers. The selection criteria were made up only of parents above eighteen years of age with a child or children under their care. Table 1 below presents the demographic information of the participants of the study in the form of frequencies and percentages (descriptive statistics).

Table 1: Demographic Data of Participants

Factor	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
• Male	50	40
• Female	70	60
Age		
• 18-25	22	18.4
• 26-35	73	60.8
• Above 35	25	20.8
Educational level		
• Basic	23	19.2
• Secondary	17	14.2
• Tertiary	80	66.6
Category of Parents		
• Schooling Parents	55	45.8
• Working Parents	65	54.2

The total number of participants in this study was 120. This consisted of 50 males (40%) and 70 (60%) of females as shown in table 1 above, representing a near gender balance of the participants. The age distribution of the participants is also recorded in the above table. It is shown that majority of the participants (60.8%) are between the ages of 26 and 35. This proves the eligibility of the participants as married people and parents for the study. Again, from table 1 above, majority of the respondents (66.6%) are with tertiary education background. In all, 54.2% of the respondents are working parents whereas the remaining 45.8% are schooling parents. This is also a fair distribution of the participants in the study.

Sampling Technique

Non-probability sampling strategies were employed in the study. Specifically, snowball and purposive sampling techniques were used in selecting the above sample. Parents were purposively selected as with this sampling technique, the researchers were able to get the opinions of the target population (Patton, 1990). Snowball sampling uses a small pool of initial informants to nominate, through their social networks, other participants who meet the eligibility criteria and could potentially contribute to a specific study (Morgan, 2008). Initial participants led the researchers to other potential participants for the study (Babbie, 2004). These techniques were used because the participants were not easily identifiable and so must be traced through some other people. When they were identified, their participation was also based on those who were willing and ready to participate.

Research Design

This is a quantitative study which used the correlational survey design. Data for the study was collected at the same time on both variables and correlated. This method seems appropriate for the study since the major aim of

the study is to establish relationship between variables. By this, questionnaires were given to participants to elicit their responses on the subject matter.

Instruments

This study used questionnaires which were divided into three parts. The first part was the demographic details of the participants such as their age, sex, educational level and category of parent. The second part was the Ten Item Personality Inventory developed by Gosling, Rentfrow and Swann (2003). This scale measures the big five personality traits. These personality traits include Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness and Neuroticism. This scale has ten (10) items that are rated on a 7-point Likert scale with response ranges from 1 (disagree strongly) to 7 (agree strongly). It has a reliability of $\alpha = 0.73$ with specific Cronbach alphas of the subscales to be .68, .40, .50, .73, and .45 for the Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, and Openness respectively (Gosling et al., 2003). It is made up of 2 items for each of the 5 dimensions. Scoring was done by reverse-scoring items 2, 4, 6, 8, and 10 and the average of the two items (the standard item and the recoded reverse-scored item) that make up each scale is taken.

Parenting Style Scale designed by Robinson, Mandelco, Olsen and Hart's (1995) was the third part of the questionnaire. The parenting styles tested by this scale are Authoritative, Authoritarian, and Permissive parenting practices, forming the three dimensions of the scale. The scale has 32 items on the basis of the changes that were made in 2001 (Robinson, Mandelco, Olsen, & Hart, 2001). Each item of the scale is rated five 5-likert described as, "never", "once in a while", "about half of the time", "very often", "always". The scale has a reliability of $\alpha = 0.81, 0.83$ and 0.65 for the authoritative, authoritarian and permissive subscales respectively. It was scored by summing up the subscales to obtain a total score for each subscale.

Procedure for Data Collection

A letter which introduces the researchers to potential participants was shown to willing respondents. A set of questionnaires in an envelope were presented to participants to fill. When approached, every participant was given an explanation of the research and its aims. Awareness was created for participants to know that their participation is purely voluntary and that they can withdraw at any stage in the study. When a participant agrees to participate, the questionnaires were administered and taken back after they have finished responding to the items on them. All the completed questionnaires were scored and the data analyzed.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical regulations outlining professional guidelines for the conduct of psychological research were strictly adhered to in this study. Informed consent form was signed by all respondents. Participants were made aware that information gathered would be used only for the purpose for which it was collected - to advance knowledge in research and where possible serve as a guide to policy makers. Awareness was created for participants to know that their participation is purely voluntary and that they can withdraw at any stage in the study. Respondents were assured that any personal information obtained will be treated confidential. Generally, all aspects of the research was conducted in conformity to laid down rules and procedures of the American Psychological Association's (APA) ethical principles and code of conduct (2010) for such a research.

Results

Test of Hypotheses

The analysis was done based on the four hypotheses of the study. The analysed results are presented below.

Hypothesis One

The first hypothesis of this study stated that parents with agreeable personality will be more permissive than those with the other personality traits. This was analysed using the One-Way Analysis of Variance (One-Way ANOVA), because there is one independent variable (personality type) which is on five levels (Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, and Openness) being measured against permissive parenting style. Tables 2 and 3 below present the results of the above hypothesis

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Means and Standard Deviation of various Personality Traits on Permissiveness

Personality	N	Mean	SD
Extraversion	28	7.18	2.97
Agreeableness	27	7.23	2.27
Conscientiousness	20	5.17	1.47
Neuroticism	16	6.00	1.76
Openness	29	6.55	1.52
Total	120	7.05	7.82

From the above table (Table 2), agreeableness scored highest on permissiveness (mean=7.23, SD=2.27). This was followed by extraversion (M=7.23, SD=2.97). The least score is recorded by conscientiousness (M=5.17, SD=1.47). The mean differences in the above table were subjected to statistical analysis using the One-Way ANOVA and the result is presented in table 6 below.

Table 3: Summary of One-Way ANOVA Results

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Between Groups	425.409	5	106.352	0.53	.11
Within Groups	4980.214	114	29.880		
Total	5305.624	119			

The ANOVA result in the above table shows that, there is no significant difference in the means observed in the scores of the various personality traits in Table 2, indicating that personality type does not significantly affect permissiveness among parents [$F_{(5, 114)}=0.53, p=0.11$]. Hypothesis one was therefore not supported.

Hypothesis Two

The second hypothesis stated that conscientious parents will be more authoritative than those with other personality traits. This was analysed using the One-Way Analysis of Variance (One-Way ANOVA) also because there is one independent variable (personality type) which is on five levels (Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, and Openness) being measured against authoritative parenting style. Tables 4 and 5 present the results

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of Means and Standard Deviation of various Personality Traits on Authoritative Parenting Style

Personality	N	Mean	SD
Extraversion	28	3.75	1.62
Agreeableness	27	2.82	1.27
Conscientiousness	20	4.85	2.11
Neuroticism	16	4.98	1.60
Openness	29	4.10	1.88
Total	120	4.05	1.82

From Table 4, Neuroticism recorded the highest score on authoritative parenting (mean=3.75, SD=1.62). Conscientiousness recorded the next higher score (mean = 4.85, SD=2.11), while the least score is recorded by Agreeableness (mean=2.82, SD=1.27). The mean differences were tested statistically with the One-Way ANOVA and the result is presented in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Summary of Two-Way ANOVA results

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Between Groups	123.050	5	41.017	14.432	0.02
Within Groups	443.350	114	2.842		
Total	566.400	119			

From the One-Way ANOVA table above, there is a significant effect of personality trait on authoritative parenting style [$F_{(5, 114)}= 14.432, p=0.02$]. This indicates a significant difference in the means recorded by the various personality traits. A Post-hoc analysis was conducted to find the specific traits that differ from each other on authoritative parenting. Results of the Post-hoc analysis is presented in table 6 below.

Table 6: Post-hoc Analysis

	Extraversion	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Neuroticism	Openness
Extraversion		.93*	1.10*	1.25*	.35 ^{ns}
Agreeableness			2.03*	2.15*	1.28*
Conscientiousness				.13 ^{ns}	.75 ^{ns}
Neuroticism					.88*
Openness					

**significant at 0.05, ns= not significant*

From the post-hoc analysis, conscientiousness differs significantly by scoring higher than extraversion, and agreeableness. It does not differ significantly from neuroticism and openness. As such, the hypothesis is only supported in part since conscientiousness does not record higher score on authoritative parenting than all the other personality traits.

Hypothesis Three

The third hypothesis stated that Male parents will be more authoritarian than female parents. This was analyzed using the independent t-test and the result is presented in Table 7 below

Table 7: Independent t-test Comparing Males and Females on Authoritarianism

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	t	p
Male	50	9.85	2.23	118	2.51	0.01
Female	70	7.80	2.90			

The above result presents that males (50) scored a mean of 9.85 and SD=2.23 on authoritarianism. Females (70) on the other hand scored a mean of 7.80 and SD=2.90. At .05 α -level and a one-tailed test, males were found to score significantly higher on authoritarianism than females [$t_{(118)}=1.53$, $p=0.01$]. The hypothesis is therefore confirmed, indicating that male parents are more authoritarian than their female counterparts in the Ghanaian setting.

Hypothesis Four

The fourth hypothesis stated that parents with a single child will be more permissive than those with two or more children. The independent t-test was used to analyse this hypothesis since two independent variables (single child parents and more than one child parents) are being compared on permissive parenting style. The result is presented in table 8 below.

Table 8: Independent t-test Comparing Parents with Single Child and those with Two or More Children on Permissive Parenting Style

Number of Children	N	Mean	SD	df	t	p
Single	42	7.65	2.52	118	0.43	0.30
Two or more	78	8.05	2.28			

From the above table, parents with single child (42) had a mean=7.65, SD=2.52 on permissive parenting style whereas parents with two or more children (78) scored a mean=8.05, SD=2.28). The independent t-test at 0.05 level of significance, one-tailed test shows that no significant difference exists in the scores of parents with single child and those with two or more children on permissive parenting style [$t_{(118)}=0.43$, $p=0.30$]. The fourth hypothesis is thus not supported.

Summary of Main Findings

- Parents with agreeable personality are not more permissive than those with the other

personality traits

- Conscientious parents are significantly higher than extraversion, and agreeableness but not from neuroticism and openness on authoritative parenting.
- Male parents are more authoritarian than their female counterparts in the Ghanaian setting
- No significant difference exists between parents with single child and those with two or more children on permissive parenting.

5. Discussion

The present study investigated the relationship between parental personality and their parenting style among parents in Ghana. Findings of the above study are further discussed.

Agreeable personality trait and permissive parenting style

It was hypothesized that parents with agreeable personality traits will adopt a more permissive parenting style than parents with other personality traits like conscientiousness, openness, neuroticism and extraversion. It turned out that, this prediction is not supported, meaning that permissive parenting style is not higher among agreeable personalities compared to the others. The findings of this study goes contrary to that of Otten, de Vries and Engels (2010) who found that extraverted, agreeable Parents, and for that matter, less emotionally stable individuals were most likely to be authoritative parents than conscientious and open parents. This indication has been widely accepted by researchers. In the event where these personality traits were tested against a specific parenting style (permissive), it was revealed that no significant difference exists among the various personality traits. Since no significant difference was observed between personality traits of parents in this regard, it means therefore that parents of any personality at all could be permissive. As such, parents must be aware of themselves and make efforts to adopt their preferred style in raising their children. The Ghanaian culture generally believes in the adage of 'spare the rod and spoil the child'. Most Ghanaian parents therefore are less permissive compared to their counterparts in other parts of the world. A child's misbehaviour is perceived as an indictment on the parent and no parent wants to be taken to task for the negative behaviours of their child. For the same reason even the parent with only a child may interpret that in the best interest of the child they need to be brought up with relatively more stringent measures rather than to be allowed their free will.

Conscientious and authoritative parenting style

Conscientious personality trait was predicted to be much more related to authoritative parenting than the rest of the personality traits. The finding was that conscientious parents are significantly higher than extraversion, and agreeableness but not from neuroticism and openness on authoritative parenting. This means that parents with neurotic and opened personalities are equally authoritative like conscientious parents. In this finding, agreement can be made with Belsky (1984) who maintained that parental personality is the strongest determinant of parenting style. In this case, some personality traits were more related to authoritative parenting than others; conscientious, neuroticism and openness. According to Baumrind (1991), authoritative parents establish rules that they expect children to follow but are more democratic. They accept questions and when their children do not follow rules, rather than punishing them are more nurturing. Their disciplinary methods are supportive rather than punitive. Conscientious parents are found to rate higher on this parenting style at least than agreeable and extraverted parents. This means that such parents will expect their children to be more responsible on their own to a large extent so long as they are given the right to produce organized behaviours. From another angle, the basic grounding of the extended family system in Ghana is eroding, and once parents are no more, children are left on their own to fend for themselves, many Ghanaian parents therefore feel obliged to instil discipline and independence in their children. This likely gave support for the present finding.

Gender differences in authoritarianism

It was predicted that male parents will be more authoritarian than females. Indeed, it was found that males are more authoritarian than females. Santrock (2007) indicated that most parents learn parenting practices from their own parents. If that is the case, then it is possible that male parents learn to be authoritarian because they see that from their male parents. Authoritarian parents establish strict rules that they expect to be followed without question. They do not explain their rules, and if children do not comply they are punished. Baumrind (1991) explains that these parents are obedience- and status-oriented, and expect their orders to be obeyed without explanation. This attitude could be related to people who may desire a lot of authority. Inherently, males can be

said to be power loving and authoritarian. As such, this characteristic can be transferred onto children especially through parenting. It can therefore be inferred that, children who spend their lives with their fathers alone or mostly with their fathers will suffer the consequences of these parenting style. Such children are more likely to be timid and unable to take initiatives. Regardless of parental gender, it must be noted that when children are raised using authoritarianism, they may develop deficiencies and later life effects. Observations in the Ghanaian setting show that children are often 'afraid' of their father and perceive them to be authority figures rather than their mothers. Although women are left with the role to nurture their children, men are expected to do the punishing. It is common to hear a mother tell their child 'wait till your father gets home and you would get your punishment'. This leaves the male no option to take that role of being the authoritarian.

Number of children and permissiveness among parents

No significant difference was found between parents with single child and those with two or more children on permissive parenting. Presence of children is one valuable thing that happens to married couples. The present finding is consistent with Querido, Warner and Eyberg (2002) who examined the relations between parenting styles and child behaviour problems in African American preschool children . As part of their findings, they suggested that the number of children in a family does affect parenting style significantly. People make efforts to attain this status of being a mother or a father. This accomplishment makes it imperative that parents may tend to adopt such training or parenting for their children, especially the first that they may be over pampered or over controlled. In the case of an only child, many parents may fear losing them. They may seek to protect and provide for them. In the long run, these parents may tend to allow a lot of leverage for such single or only child to operate. They rarely discipline their children and have low expectations of them. In this study, the above assumption was not ascertained.

Likely underpinnings of the present finding from a Ghanaian perspective on the number of children versus permissiveness seems to indicate that a high premium is put on child rearing and the outcome of the child is so important that even if a parent had only one child, they would not over indulge them possibly for the fear of their turning out wrong. Any child who puts up negative or undesirable behaviour incurs the wrath of the community and commonly such a child is accused of 'poor upbringing' by the mother (that is to say a child's behaviour positive or negative reflects parent's personality). This basic assumption is reflective even in the Ghanaian phraseology and proverbial sayings. In one such Akan (one of the dominant Ghanaian language dialects) proverb- "*abofra anse oni a, na ose nanya*" (a child reflects either of the parents personality), expounds on why parents in Ghana take child rearing seriously. Parents will thus be associated with the actions of their children should they go wayward. The attachment makes such close associates assume responsibility of the actions of their child (Agyemang & Otoo, 2013). Authoritarian discipline is preferred in that parents are expected to teach the child what he/she is expected to do. A parent who cares about their own is expected to be stern when it matters rather than dialogue with the child. Even though there seem to be a steady shift from this orientation, this is often not negotiable. This may be related to the idea that culturally it is believed that the older person has more experience and by default more knowledge than a child. It is not quite surprising that the value parents place on their children be it only one or more than one is high and so may all assume equal flexible or strict training methods.

Contributions and Implication of the Study

Unsurprisingly, there is a relationship between parents' personality and their parenting style though it might not be highly significant, it can be helpful for parents to be aware of the typical strategies that they use when dealing with their children, especially since warm, responsive parenting with high standards for behavioural control has consistently been linked with a number of positive outcomes for children. This study further advice parents that though their personality can often help predict their behaviour or feelings in a particular situation, it does not necessarily dictate how they behave. However, in their bid to act in tandem or in opposition to those tendencies, parents need to be aware of them. In fact, if conscientious parents create room for their children to operate especially under such controlled instructions with a lot of democracy, it is confident to have them yield children who will become just as just responsible, efficient and organized as their conscientious parents. This will serve a serious good for both the children and their parents. This findings is also a clarion call to all parents that whether they are parents with a lot of children or a few, whether single parents or not and also whether they use aggressive or democratic parenting style, personality has a role to play hence they need to always be aware. However, if the knowledge is espoused and well appreciated, many parents would rather desire to form parenting plans that will produce a society acceptable child that everyone would be comfortable with.

Limitation and Recommendations for Future Studies

This study was not without limitations. However, these limitations do not undermine the validity of the findings of the study. In the first place, the sample selected was only from the Accra-Metropolis. This is an urban setting. As such, potential participants in the rural areas were left out hence the extent of generalisation of study findings to all Ghanaian parents is limited. Another limitation is the fact that this study used a quantitative method in measuring the two variables under study. Ideally, inclusions of a qualitative method like in-depth - interview could have added strength to elicit more exploratory responses. In future researches, efforts must be made to include as many research participants as the sample size for this study was quite small. Usually, larger sample size will increase the generalizability of the findings of the study. Therefore, efforts to select larger sample size in a survey such as this are highly recommended. This will also provide room for including participants from the rural areas. Again, future studies should consider using both qualitative and quantitative method that will allow for the interviewing of participants in order to elicit the full or best responses from them. A qualitative method would have elicited the implications of the findings from the participants own perspective rather than the researchers'. The researchers also recommend that future researchers use level of education and setting (urban or rural) as moderators of the relationship.

Conclusion

Per the findings of this study, a number of conclusions can be drawn. Parents must be aware of the fact that they have the tendency to raise their children in diverse ways. It is therefore advisable for parents to be aware of their own personalities and the method of parenting they employ in raising their children. Secondly, as many fathers are more authoritarian than mothers in the Ghanaian setting, parents must look out for means of negating the authoritarian styles on their children. This will avert the negative effects as well as prevent children especially the male ones from acquiring the same attribute and therefore propagating the undesirable parenting styles. Since permissive parenting results in children who may not be well nurtured, parents must ensure they limit the extent to which they grant so much space for their children to operate. The present study thus provides culturally nuanced findings to the existing body of literature.

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Acknowledgement

The Authors would want to dedicate this work to Professor Yaa Ntiamoah-Baidu, former Pro-Vice Chancellor of the University of Ghana (Research, Innovation and Development) and Director of the UG-Carnegie Project, for her insatiable and voracious passion in assisting in providing rigour to the pioneers in the PhD course work.

Gleaning from an Akan (one of the dominant Ghanaian language dialects) parlance; “*If the duiker is strong, the hunter has a part to play*” and this work was principally spurred by the zest and encouragement we had attending the first session of the doctoral school organised under the auspices of the UG-Carnegie Project for the 2013/2014 PhD year group

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