



Is Authoritative Parenting the Dominant Style in the Contemporary Western Family? A Report on a Cross-Cultural Israeli Sample

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Abstract Recent information on intergenerational differences in parenting styles suggests that parental authority nowadays is becoming more democratic than it was before, as reflected by a growing body of research showing a consistent transition from authoritarian to authoritative parenting across generations. The study tested the hypothesis regarding the dominance of authoritative parenting in the contemporary Western family, using a self-report survey in a sample of Israeli parents and children ($N=937$) via the Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ, 1991). The obtained data were used to employ a series of multivariate analyses of variance with repeated measures and *Chi-square* analyses to determine the differences in the parenting styles within this sample of parents. The results affirmed the authoritative parenting as the preferable style in the sample, with its mean scores from parents' and children's reports exceeding the non-authoritative parenting styles, regardless of the parental sex. This general pattern was similarly evident within each of the three sector subgroups examined in the study (i.e., Jewish, Arab-Muslim, and Bedouin). While the parents' parenting style differed by the child's gender and parent's education, the mean differences between the parenting styles remained significant even after controlling for those demographics. Finally, the category classification of the sample's parents yielded significantly more authoritative parents than non-authoritative parents, suggesting that authoritative parenting is the dominant style in the contemporary Israeli family.

Keywords Parenting styles · Authoritative · Ethnic · Family

Introduction

Parenting is a broad construct that comprises stable and durable attitudes and behaviors regarding child-rearing (Smetana, 2017). Factor analyses of parental behavior typically yielded two orthogonal factors normally conceptualized as responsiveness and demandingness, depicting parental aspects such as warmth, autonomy granting, reasoned communication, behavior regulation, control, confrontation, and monitoring (Baumrind, 2005). From these orthogonal dimensions, four styles of discerned parenting can be composed: Authoritative (high responsiveness and high demandingness), Indulgent (also known as permissive – high responsiveness and low demandingness), Authoritarian (low responsiveness and high demandingness), and Neglectful/Uninvolved (low responsiveness and low demandingness) (Baumrind, 1991; Darling & Steinberg, 1993; Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Authoritative parents and Authoritarian parents differ on responsiveness variables (e.g., warmth and support), whereas Authoritative and Indulgent parents differ on demandingness variables (e.g., control and protection) (Baumrind, 1966, 2005). Neglectful parents differ from the other three styles of parents on both dimensions, as they perform poorly on both the demandingness and the responsiveness dimensions.

Research on parental socialization, mainly in Anglo-Saxon cultural contexts with European-American middle-class families, suggests that authoritative parenting is the optimal familial marital atmosphere in relation to behavioral, emotional, and educational well-being of children and adolescents (Pinquart & Gerke, 2019; Pinquart & Kauser, 2018;

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Pinquart, 2017a, 2017b). However, the cultural and social contexts in which parental socialization takes place could moderate the negative or positive influences of parenting styles on the child's outcomes, as recognized in some studies with ethnic minorities from the United States (e.g., Chao, 2001; Deater-Deckard et al., 1996), as well as in studies with Arab societies (Dwairy & Achoui, 2006). These studies' findings suggest that authoritarian family patterns may not necessarily be detrimental to the development and well-being of children, contrary to the negative implications documented in the research literature for this parenting style in more democratic societies. Other studies, mainly conducted in European and South American countries, revealed that in some cultural climates, parental warmth without strictness (i.e., indulgent or permissive) could be associated with optimal child development outcomes (Garcia & Garcia, 2009; Garcia et al., 2020; Martinez et al., 2021; Queiroz et al., 2020).

Over the last few decades, a growing body of research has documented various patterns of continuity and discontinuity (i.e., differences) in parenting over the course of two or more consecutive generations of parents. An overview of research data aggregated in this field of research suggests that basic patterns of parental rearing styles and behaviors tend to repeat themselves across generations, so that offspring's actual and perceived experiences in parent–child relations in the family predict their own parenting in the present time (Belsky et al., 2009; Conger et al., 2009; Rothenberg, 2019). Such main patterns of positive and negative parenting as warmth-supportive rearing, behavioural control, hostility, child maltreatment, and harsh punishment, exhibit modest, yet significant, continuity between parents across generations. While both positive and negative parenting behaviors seem to be transmitted across time and generations in the family (Conger et al., 2009), less is known about the conditions of when and why parenting experienced in one generation does not occur in the next (Belsky et al., 2009). Such is the case in recent research on intergenerational differences in parenting styles, where transformation in patterns of parental styles and authority across generations were observed (Campbell & Gilmore, 2007; Garcia et al., 2020; Ghorbani et al., 2021; O'Brien et al., 2010; Shechory-Bitton & Ben-David, 2014; Yaffe & Seroussi, 2018). The cumulative research evidence from the past twenty years generally reflects an increase in parental warmth, support, and behavioral control alongside a decrease in harsh parental practices, generally signifying a transition from authoritarian to authoritative parenting styles across generations. This could possibly be the result of some social factors that have been gradually reshaping the contemporary family and parenthood in recent decades. Such factors are education, culture, socio-economic status, values of individualism, and more (Ghorbani et al., 2021). The differences between two

consecutive generations of parents, particularly in authoritative parenting, may reflect the recent socio-cultural ongoing changes in educational approaches during the recent decades, shifting from stiffer forms of parental authority and practices to more democratic approaches (Yaffe & Seroussi, 2018). Indeed, the trend of shifting parenting between generations has been recorded not only in Western societies (i.e., developed Western countries such as USA, Australia, Canada, and European countries), who endorse individualistic values in the family, but also among some eastern and Asian countries, as well as in ethnic minorities who share more collectivistic and conservative values (Pinquart & Kauser, 2018; Shechory-Bitton & Ben-David, 2014; Shechory-Bitton et al., 2015; Su & Hen, 2020; Yaffe, 2020a). This suggests that parenting styles and practices in the family are undergoing a meaningful global change over the last decades until nowadays, reflecting a transition to a new favorable parental style and authority. In this regard, Ghorbani and colleagues (2021) have found an increase in parental warmth and behavioral control across two maternal generations in the Iranian family over time, which they ascribed to on-going social processes of growing education levels, decrease in family size, growing individualism, and the emphasis of experts on applying the authoritative parenting style in the family. This, along with the empirical evidence derived from western societies, indicates a global gradual transition toward authoritative parenting over time toward and during the twenty-first century.

The Current Study

In light of the generational changing parenting, the current study aims to further illuminate how dominant the authoritative parenting is in the Western family. The term Western also refers to nations that have assimilated Western institutions, techniques, and values (McNeill, 1997), such as Israel, where the current investigation takes place. The study employs a self-report survey of a large sample of Israeli parents and children in families from three main sectors in Israel: Jews, Arab-Muslims, and Arab-Bedouins. Recent meta-analyses data indicate that currently authoritative parenting constitutes the cross-culturally preferable style in numerous contexts of developmental and educational outcomes in children and adolescents, such as mental health (i.e., internalizing and externalizing behaviors) (Gorostiaga et al., 2019; Kawabata et al., 2011; Pinquart, 2017a, 2017b; Ruiz-Hernández et al., 2019), academic achievement (Masud et al., 2015; Pinquart & Kauser, 2018), self-esteem (Pinquart & Gerke, 2019), internet-based behaviors, substance use (Cablova et al., 2014), and other health behaviors (Sokol et al., 2017). These data underpin the importance of advocating more authoritative parenting in the contemporary family, not only in the majority populations but also among ethnic

minority groups. While many studies investigated aspects of parenting in affinity to diverse outcome contexts in children and adolescents, less attention has been given simply to the question of how dominant the authoritative parenting style is in the contemporary family. The body of research on intergenerational transmission of parenting provides some evidence regarding the differences between parental authority across generations. However, in the absence of longitudinal data to support changes in parenting over time, it is difficult to determine whether authoritative parenting is indeed a more dominant parental style in the contemporary family than it was before twenty-first century. This is because most of the evidence showing shifting in patterns of parental authority (or parenting styles) across generations is based on retrospective reports of parents and descendants. The current study offers a way to partially foster our understanding about the current issue, simply by inspecting the dominant parenting in the Israeli case of the contemporary family. Assuming that the intergenerational trend shown in the literature toward more authoritative parenting is genuine, this must be reflected in the study's findings in the form of differences in levels and rates of the parenting styles among the sample's families (as hypothesized below). Furthermore, in dealing with this issue with ethnic sectors in Israeli society (that is, the Arab-Muslim and Bedouin sectors), our findings may also facilitate the understanding of how parenthood in ethnic-conservative families is influenced and transformed by the Western values of mainstream society. Arab families in the Middle East have been described specifically as emphasizing traditional and conservative values, such as obedience to authority and autocratic parenting decision making (Al-Simadi & Atoum, 2000; Dwairy et al., 2006). Characterized by these collectivistic cultural values, Arab populations retain more authoritarian parenting styles and practices in the family (Dwairy, 2004) and, compared to the typical Jewish family, tend to over legitimize and endorse more parental authority (Yaffe et al., 2018).

We used the information from the body of research on intergenerational differences in parenting as a framework for the study hypotheses, expecting that the authoritative parenting style will be more dominant in the sample's families compared to the non-authoritative parenting style. More specifically, we hypothesized that the participants would perceive the sample's parents as more authoritative than non-authoritative (i.e., permissive and authoritarian), so that authoritative parents in the sample would be found to be significantly more prevalent than non-authoritative parents.

Method

Participants

Participants were 937 parents and children from several ethnic sectors in Israel, as follows: 245 Israel-Bedouin, 498 Israeli-Jews, 178 Israel-Arabs (Muslims), 11 Israeli-Arabs (Christian), and 5 Israel-Druze. Of the 937 study informants, 633 were children reporting their parents' parenting styles and 304 were parents who self-reported their parenting styles. With respect to children's reports, the children's age ranges from 9 to 22 ($M_{age} = 14.31 \pm 2.91$) and the parents' age ranges from 23 to 69 ($M_{age} = 44.61 \pm 9.19$). With respect to parent's reports, the children's age ranges from 6 to 11 ($M_{age} = 9.23 \pm 1.58$) and the parents' age ranges from 24 to 65 ($M_{age} = 38.98 \pm 7.87$). Finally, the parental education in the general sample was distributed as follows: 30% had academic/vocational education, 30.5% had a high school diploma, about 6.8% had elementary/middle school education, and the rest did not report the parent's education.

Measures

Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ)

The PAQ (Buri, 1991) contains 30 items and is used to classify parents into one of Baumrind's three parenting styles (Baumrind, 1971), based on the child's self-report: *Authoritative* (10 items, e.g., "As I was growing up, once family policy had been established, my parents discussed the reasoning behind the policy with the children in the family"), *Authoritarian* (10 items, e.g., "As I was growing up, my parents did not allow me to question any decision they had made"), and *Permissive* (10 items, e.g., "As I was growing up, my parents seldom gave me expectations and guidelines for my behavior"). The response scale for an item ranges from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The index for each parenting style is the sum of the relevant items of each scale. Thus, the total score for each parenting scale ranges from 10 to 50, with a higher score reflecting a higher specification of the style. It is a valid questionnaire with relatively high internal consistency and test-retest reliabilities (0.74 to 0.78) (see: Buri, 1991; Smetana, 1995), widely used in Israel (e.g., Yaffe, 2018) and around the world to measure Baumrind's (1971) three basic styles of parenting. Previous research has reported supportive evidence for the PAQ's validity in its Hebrew version, with adequate rates of reliability and internal consistency (Yaffe, 2018). The current study recorded Cronbach's Alpha coefficients for the permissive, authoritarian, and authoritative scales of 0.76, 0.82, and 0.79 (respectively), which are consistent with the reliability data reported for the tool in past research.

Parent's Report Version

The parent version of the PAQ used is the Parental Authority Questionnaire—Revised (PAQ-R: Reitman et al., 2002), designed for parental self-reporting of Baumrind's three parenting styles. The revised questionnaire is basically identical to the original PAQ, with its items converted and validated into a parent's report version. When revising that instrument, Reitman and colleagues (2002) preserved the original structure of the questionnaire but converted its statements into the first person. Similar to the original tool, the PAQ-R validity was established upon correlations against different parental constructs with conceptual relevance. In the present study, we recorded a good internal consistency reliability data for the permissive (Cronbach's $\alpha=0.82$) and the authoritarian (Cronbach's $\alpha=0.83$) scales, but more limited results for the authoritative scale (Cronbach's $\alpha=0.81$).

Procedure

Participants were asked to take part in an anonymous online survey in which parents report their parenting styles via the PAQ-R and descendants (i.e., children and adolescents) report their parents' parenting styles via the PAQ. Participants were recruited through personal contacts as well as online announcements on academic forums and social networks, as part of several broader research objectives, for which the ethics approval was obtained from the IRB of researcher's academic institution. Prior to filling out the questionnaire, the participants were asked to read a short introduction with the study objectives and procedure, containing basic instructions and information about the participants' rights as part of the study's survey. All participants were asked to complete a short demographic form, which included personal details about the parent's and the descendant's gender and age, and the parent's education. The participants signed an on-line digital informed consent form, while minor participants were also requested to obtain their parents' approval to fill in the on-line questionnaire after checking its contents.

Results

The following data are drawn from two independent groups of reporting sources: parents ($N=304$) and children ($N=633$), who reported their demographics (child's sex and age; parent's sex, age, and education; participants' ethnicity) and the parenting styles via the PAQ. In analyzing the differences between the parenting styles in the family, first we display the general main and interaction effects for the demographics on the research variables (i.e., the parenting styles) (Table 1), then the means, standard deviations, and

the F scores for each individual effect (i.e., between subject effects) are presented in Table 2. Next, we tested the differences between the levels of the three parenting styles in the general sample using MANOVA with repeated measures separately for child's and parent's reports. Since the correlations between the informants' age and the parenting scores were negligible and, for the most part, insignificant, the former variable was not taken into account in these analyses. We ultimately considered the categoric distribution of the sample's parenting after classifying the participants into one of the three styles (by the higher score), in an attempt to determine the most prevalent parenting style in the current sample. These statistical analyses were also conducted separately for each ethnic group, in order to compare the differences in the parenting styles and determine the dominant parenting across three Israeli sectors.

Table 1 shows the multivariate tests, revealing general main effects for the child's sex and parents' education, but not for parental sex, on the parenting styles. As can be seen, the effects of these two variables also interact, indicating that higher parental education associates with parenting styles differently for boys and girls. As discussed below, this interaction effect specifically refers solely to the permissive parenting style, whereby the differences in its levels between boys and girls vary for parents with different levels of education. Lastly, we did not record a main effect for the parent's sex on the parenting styles, which means that mothers and fathers did not differ in their parenting styles in the sample and, therefore, were not controlled for in the following analyses.

Further, Table 2 indicates that all three parenting styles' scores vary by the child's sex and parental levels of education, meaning that permissive, authoritarian, and authoritative parenting styles are perceived differently by boys and girls (or by parents of boys and girls) and by parents (and their children) with different levels of education. Since some informants did not report parent/child sex, we opted to include them as unspecified sex rather than dropping them of the sample. The Fisher's least significant difference (LSD)

Table 1 Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) factorial (3 X 3 X 3) for parenting styles (Permissive, Authoritarian, and Authoritative)

Source of variance	Λ	F	df	df (error)	p
(A) Child sex	.94	6.73	6	1214	<.001
(B) Parent sex	.99	.73	6	1214	.63
(C) Parent education	.92	8.31	6	1214	<.001
A X B	.97	1.80	9	1477	.064
A X C	.95	2.61	12	1606	.002
B X C	.97	1.72	12	1606	.060
A X B X C	.99	.36	12	1606	.978

Table 2 Means (standard deviations) and main multivariate F values for the differences in three parenting styles by sample's demographics

	Parent's sex			Child's sex						Parent's education			
	Father	Mother	Not-specified	Boy		Girl		Not-specified	F(2,609)	Elementary	High school	Vocational / academic	F(2,609)
				Father	Mother	Not-specified	Not-specified						
Permissive	30.11 (6.68)	29.37 (7.20)	28.21 (6.57)	.37	29.45 (6.38)	33.18 (6.80)	26.30 (6.55)	14.54***	31.80 (7.30)	28.90 (7.66)	27.91 (5.72)	6.81***	
Authoritarian	32.56 (7.70)	32.48 (7.30)	31.56 (7.58)	.22	30.89 (7.52)	34.56 (7.67)	32.29 (6.54)	4.86**	33.78 (7.03)	32.98 (7.11)	30.52 (7.21)	14.15***	
Authoritative	36.11 (6.52)	36.68 (6.36)	32.29 (7.24)	1.40	33.80 (6.51)	38.02 (6.91)	35.98 (5.44)	3.31*	35.19 (7.21)	34.94 (6.00)	36.67 (6.78)	6.10**	

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

post hoc analyses of the demographics' individual effects indicated that parents with academic/vocational education were significantly less permissive than parents without a high-school diploma ($p < 0.05$) and less authoritarian than parents with a high-school diploma and parents without a high-school diploma ($p < 0.001$). Parents with academic/vocational education were also more authoritative than both parents with a high-school diploma ($p < 0.001$) and parents without a high-school diploma ($p < 0.05$). Interestingly, the post-hoc analyses revealed that girls' parents are significantly higher in either parenting style than boys' parents (p value ranges from 0.017 to < 0.001), as perceived by both parents and children. Finally, the individual interaction effects of the parent's education and child's sex on the parenting styles indicated that parents with non-academic/vocational education (i.e., parents with a high-school diploma or less) are more permissive toward girls rather than toward boys ($F(4, 609) = 6.47, p < 0.001$). These differences in permissive parenting expressions according to the child's sex were not the case for parents with academic/vocational education.

Next, we tested the within-subject differences between the three parenting styles, to determine the dominant style (i.e., in terms of the one with a significantly higher score according to the parents' and the children's reports), first in the general sample (Table 3) and then for each ethnic sector subset (i.e., Israeli-Jews, Israeli-Arabs, and Israeli-Bedouins. Participants pertaining to the other ethnic sectors were dropped for this analysis due to the groups' small size).

As can be seen from Table 3, the authoritative parenting style scored significantly higher than the other parenting scales for both parents' and children's reports, meaning that the sample's participants perceived their parenting styles (and their parents' parenting styles) as more authoritative than either authoritarian or permissive. These results were evident also within the combined sample, even when controlling for the sample's demographics with significant effect on the parenting styles. Alongside this, the participants also scored significantly higher on the authoritarian scale compared to the permissive scale, meaning that both informants' groups perceived the sample's parents as least permissive.

In attempt to figure out if and how the differences between parenting styles vary across families from different ethnical background, we applied the same analysis separately for Israeli-Jewish, Israeli-Arab, and Israeli-Bedouin families. As mentioned, since the data of these various Israeli sectors were collected only from children and adolescents (but not from parents), we did not consider the ethnic group as part of the demographic variables in the prior analyses where the sample also contained the parental reports. Apart from the disparities in effect size for the differences in parenting styles across sectors, the result of this analysis demonstrates the resemblance of the parenting styles' hierarchy of scores,

Table 3 Means (standard deviations) and *F* values of the repeated measures analysis of variance for the differences between parenting styles by informant without/with controlling for child’s sex and parent’s education

	Parenting Style			F(df)	<i>p</i>
	Permissive	Authoritarian	Authoritative		
PAQ—Child (<i>N</i> = 633/522)	29.20/31.95 (6.54/6.63)	30.75/33.72 (7.41/7.59)	34.76/35.48 (6.72/6.71)	123.11 (1.71, 1078.73) / 6.58 (1.72, 880.20)	< .001/.003
PAQ-R – Parent (<i>N</i> = 304/109)	25.25/23.44 (7.17/4.90)	29.54/29.91 (7.31/6.21)	36.80/36.35 (6.75/5.55)	178.53 (2, 606) / 100.52 (1.77, 187.10)	< .001/< .001
General (<i>N</i> = 937/631)	27.92/29.82 (7.00/6.84)	30.36/32/51 (7.40/7.39)	35.42/35.70 (6.80/6.59)	327.57 (1.84, 1723.68) / 86.43 (1.72, 1066.96)	< .001/< .001

Bonferroni’s post-hoc tests for each parenting pairwise comparisons are all significant at ≤ 0.1%

with the authoritative parenting as the highest scored style among the Israeli-Jewish ($F(2, 386) = 76.99, p < 0.001$; Partial $\eta^2 = 0.285$), the Israeli-Arab ($F(2, 354) = 18.08, p < 0.001$; Partial $\eta^2 = 0.093$), and the Israeli-Bedouin families ($F(2, 488) = 48.03, p < 0.001$; Partial $\eta^2 = 0.164$). The results within each ethnic group (or Israeli sector) are identical to the general pattern reflected in Table 3, as the Bedouin, Arab, and Jewish children similarly perceive their parents’ parenting style as more authoritative than authoritarian and permissive parents (in descending order).

Lastly, we converted the parenting styles’ scores into a categorical variable, whereby each participant’s style is classified according to the maximum score between the three continuous parenting scales (Buri, 1991). This was followed by testing the parenting styles’ distribution in each informant’s group, in order to determine the differences in their proportions in the current sample. Table 4 displays the results of this analysis.

The table’s data indicate that the authoritative parenting is significantly more prevalent than the non-authoritative styles in both informants’ groups, with its proportion in the general sample approaching 60%. The authoritarian parenting style is the second most prevalent style, whose proportion among both groups exceeds the prevalence of the permissive parenting style. This parental distribution pattern was generally similar in the Israeli-Jewish sub-group ($\chi^2(2) = 314.93, p < 0.001$) and the Israeli-Bedouin sub-group ($\chi^2(2) = 43.21,$

$p < 0.001$), but not in the Israeli-Arab sub-group, where the authoritative and authoritarian styles were equally prevalent (sharing about 40% each, both significantly more prevalent than the permissive style ($\chi^2(2) = 17.54, p < 0.001$)).

Summary and Conclusions

In light of the intergenerational metamorphosis observed in parenting throughout the last few decades, the current study aimed to trace the dominant parenting style in the contemporary family by surveying families belonging to three central sectors in the Israeli society. This allowed us also to consider the effect of ethnicity on parenting in the contemporary family, by comparing the parenting styles differences between Israeli-Jewish, Israeli-Arab (Muslim), and Israeli-Bedouin families. The research hypothesis, according to which the authoritative parenting is the dominant parenting style in the Israeli family, was confirmed in two ways: (1) Within subject differences in parenting styles. We found the mean scores of authoritative parenting scale to be significantly higher than those of the non-authoritative scales (i.e., the authoritarian and permissive styles), both for children’s and parents’ reports, even after controlling for the relevant demographics. These results applied similarly in each of the ethnic sub-groups. (2) Categorical classification to parenting style. We found significant differences in the proportional distribution

Table 4 Parenting styles distribution by informant and the *Chi-square* results for the differences in the proportions of parenting styles

	Parenting Style						Chi-square (df = 2)	<i>p</i>
	Permissive		Authoritarian		Authoritative			
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%		
PAQ—Child (<i>N</i> = 633)	87	13.7	195	30.9	351	55.5	166.98	< .001
PAQ-R – Parent (<i>N</i> = 304)	28	9.2	76	25.0	200	65.8	155.47	< .001
General (<i>N</i> = 937)	115	12.3	271	28.9	551	58.8	312.52	< .001

Each pairwise proportion comparison using the binomial test is significant at < .001

of the sample's parenting styles, so that authoritative parents were relatively more prevalent than permissive and authoritarian parents in the current sample based on both children's and parents' reports. In considering the effects of the demographic variables on the parenting styles prior to testing the research hypothesis, the data confirmed the relationships between parent's education and child's sex and parenting styles, as observed in previous research (Pychyl et al., 2002; Su & Hen, 2020; Wang et al., 2020; Yaffe, 2020b). However, the data failed to reflect a unique relationship between parental sex and parenting styles, which is commonly reported in the literature (Yaffe, 2020b). Nor did the data express an association between age and parenting styles in the general sample, meaning that parents and children did not change their perceptions regarding the parents' parenting styles as child got older. While this may be counterintuitive to the notion that authoritative parental behaviors and practices in child-rearing tend to be more age-contingent (Yaffe, 2020b), the change in parenting perceptions is probably more likely to be reflected longitudinally with paired groups of parents and children followed over time (i.e., rather than in the cross-sectional design employed in the current study).

According to the findings, both children/adolescents and parents in the contemporary family in Israel perceive their parents and themselves (respectively) as more authoritative than authoritarian and permissive (in descending order). Based on those perceptions, the categorial classification of the sample's parents yielded significant more authoritative parents than non-authoritative parents, suggesting that the authoritative parenting is the dominant style in the contemporary Israeli family. These findings are consistent with the intergenerational trend of changing parenting observed in several studies that dealt with continuity and discontinuity in parenting styles across generations (Belsky et al., 2009; Campbell & Gilmore, 2007; Garcia et al., 2020; Ghorbani et al., 2021; O'Brien, 2010; Shechory Bitton & Ben-David, 2014; Rothenberg, 2019; Yaffe & Seroussi, 2018), where the transition into a more authoritative parenting style in recent generations was evident. Although the current study does not actually deal with differences in parenting across generations, its findings are likely to reflect the trend of the authoritative-transforming parenting observed in this body of research. A major social challenge in which this ongoing transformation of the new parental authority in the contemporary family could be cultivated is the diminution of usage of corporal punishment as a parental disciplinary practice. Practitioners and educators can utilize the momentum of the growing authoritative climate in the contemporary family to address this particular issue, by imparting alternative disciplinary practices to replace physical ones (especially with behaviorally challenged children).

Our data suggest that the transition into authoritative parenting is occurring not only in the general population but

also in families of ethnic groups, as the superiority of the authoritative style in the current sample was evident also among the Arab and Bedouin sub-groups. These findings fit in with recent research data recorded in the Middle East and Asia (Ghorbani et al., 2021; Shechory-Bitton & Ben-David, 2014; Shechory-Bitton et al., 2015; Su & Hen, 2020; Yaffe, 2020a), where the gradual shift to more authoritative parenting across generations in families from culturally-traditional and collectivistic societies was observed. Our results, in this context, may reflect the process of acculturation that Arab families in Israel are undergoing, subject to the fact that all the sample's participants from the Arab families were Hebrew-literate. As for ethnic-Arab families in Israel specifically, being a part of Israeli society, their members are exposed to the Western-individualistic values adopted by Israeli society in recent decades (Shechory-Bitton et al., 2015; Yaffe, 2020a), which had a great deal of impact on its contemporary family. Such values, followed by several legislation developments regarding children's rights (e.g., the prohibition of corporal punishment), have created a novel family atmosphere, whereby parent-child relations have been democratized and a new form of parental authority has been shaped. This mainly resulted in more closeness and warmth between parents and children, less exertion of aversive disciplinary force, and granting more autonomy and freedom to children (Omer, 2008; Shechory-Bitton et al., 2015). While this process may generally characterize the transformation of parenting in the Israeli family (as well as in other Western families), the intergenerational transition to authoritative parenting seems somewhat slower among ethnic families compared to its pace in the mainstream population (Shechory-Bitton & Ben-David, 2014; Shechory-Bitton et al., 2015; Yaffe, 2020a). This may partially explain our finding in which within the Muslim subgroup the proportion of the authoritative and authoritarian parents was equal, which was not the case in the general sample.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

These conclusions are limited in several respects. First, despite the study's large sample that included, in addition to the Jewish families, families from two other core sectors in Israeli society, this sample is not representative of the general Israeli population nor of the sectors specifically sampled. Apart from the fact that the sampling process was not conducted systematically, participants were deliberately chosen based on their Hebrew-literate skills to be able complete questionnaires in Hebrew. This might seriously limit the generalizability of the study's findings, particularly in the Arab and the Bedouin subgroups. In this context, a replication of the current study using a representative sample of the population in question could reinforce the current findings and provide a more reliable view of the dominant parenting

in the contemporary family of the twenty-first century. Further, despite the study's claim to provide evidence for an intergenerational transition into more authoritative parenting during the recent decades, its data do not actually deal with differences in parenting across generations. Rather, the study solely pictures the present state in the contemporary family, logically assuming that this state reflects the change in parenting styles over time. However, in order to further validate this assumption and the study's conclusions, an actual comparison between generations of parents is required – best achieved by using longitudinal data. Assuming that the changing parenting across generations is an ongoing process, this body of research could benefit from longitudinally documenting the differences between parenting styles across consecutive generations by, if possible, following-up existing data from previous research.

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Declarations

Conflict of Interest The author declared no potential conflict of interests with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Consent for Publication Permission is given by the author to publish the original material included in the article (no third-party permission for any material is required).

Ethics Approval The study was conducted in accordance with the ethical standards of the American Psychological Association (APA). The study involving human participants was reviewed and approved by an institutional ethics committee of Ohalo academic college, Israel.

Informed Consent Was obtained from all individual adult participants included in the study; assent was obtained from children.

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