

## Parenting Feeding Styles and Weight Status Among Pre-School Child: Literature Review

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** Children who have nutritional problems today not only disrupt their health but also their opportunities in the future. The factors causing poor nutritional status in children are multifactorial, including parenting feeding style.

**Research Methods:** A systematic research review following PRISMA guidelines was conducted to identify, discuss, and integrate recent research investigating the relationship between parenting styles and child obesity. It first summarizes the evidence regarding the role of food parenting practices in shaping and maintaining children's nutritional and weight status. It then describes empirical evidence on the relation between general parenting and children's weight status.

**Research Result:** Six electronic databases were searched using standardized language to identify quantitative studies describing associations of general parenting styles with children's weight status aged 3–5 years. Eligible peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2018 and 2020 were included. Eleven studies met the inclusion criteria. Few studies focused on general feeding. Most studies focused on controlling food parenting practices and general parenting styles. Parental restriction of food was positively associated with child obesity, while pressure to eat and monitoring yielded inconsistent results.

**Conclusion:** Parenting styles are consistently associated with weight status among young children. Research is needed to identify positive parenting behaviors around a child's weight that may be used as targets for health promotion.

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### BACKGROUND

Nutritional problems in children are one of several priority problems that must be resolved. Children who have dietary problems today not only disrupt their health but also their opportunities in the future. The factors causing poor nutritional status in children are multifactorial, including parenting feeding style. A growing body of evidence suggests that children's eating behaviors are primarily influenced by their parents and home eating structure (Couch et al. 2014), which set the stage for future habits and may influence a child's weight status (Agras et al. 1990). Parents are important agents through which food preferences and intake patterns are set, via both direct and indirect influences, from controlling the child's intake to passively modeling a healthy or unhealthy diet (Shloim et al. 2015). The present review focuses on parenting or feeding styles and specific feeding practices that might influence child BMI.

Parenting style is a general behavioral construct that sets the emotional context within which parents and children interact. These have often been characterized as having at least two dimensions: demandingness (how much control parents exercise) and responsiveness (warmth and acceptance in response to their children's needs). Within this definition, there are four types of parenting styles, varying along these two

dimensions: (1) authoritative parenting, associated with a high level of demandingness and rules with high responsiveness to the child; (2) authoritarian parenting linked to high demandingness but low responsiveness characterized by rules but with less influence from the child's needs; (3) indulgent parenting combining low demandingness and high responsiveness with few rules but high engagement with the child's needs; and (4) uninvolved parenting which is associated with both low demandingness and low responsiveness. An authoritative parenting style is generally associated with positive child outcomes, such as higher school performance (Kuppens and Ceulemans 2019) (Zhou et al. 2025).

Feeding styles may be viewed as a sub-category of parenting styles that are specific to mealtimes, and therefore, the exact dimensions of demandingness and responsiveness are applied in the feeding context (Blissett 2011). Thus, with an authoritative feeding style, parents actively encourage their child to eat but achieve this through supportive behaviors, including rules explained sensitively. In contrast, with an authoritarian feeding style, parents encourage eating through parent-centric rules.

The present systematic review was undertaken to identify and discuss recent research exploring the specific parenting feeding styles associated with weight status among children 4-10 years. Another goal of the current review was to identify the gaps in the existing literature so that recommendations for future research and interventions can be made. The review structure was based on the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and meta-analysis guidance (Moher et al. 2009).

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This systematic review was conducted from 2018 to February 2020 using PRISMA reporting guidelines. Based on this guide, there are several steps in this research: 1) find criteria, 2) look for sources of information, 3) study selection, 4) data collection process, and 5) data selection. The steps of the PRISMA diagram involved.

### **Identification**

In this initial stage, you search for relevant studies. Databases such as PubMed, Scopus, or Web of Science are commonly used to identify potential studies. This step includes screening the literature to gather all the relevant articles, reports, and studies based on the defined eligibility criteria.

### **Screening**

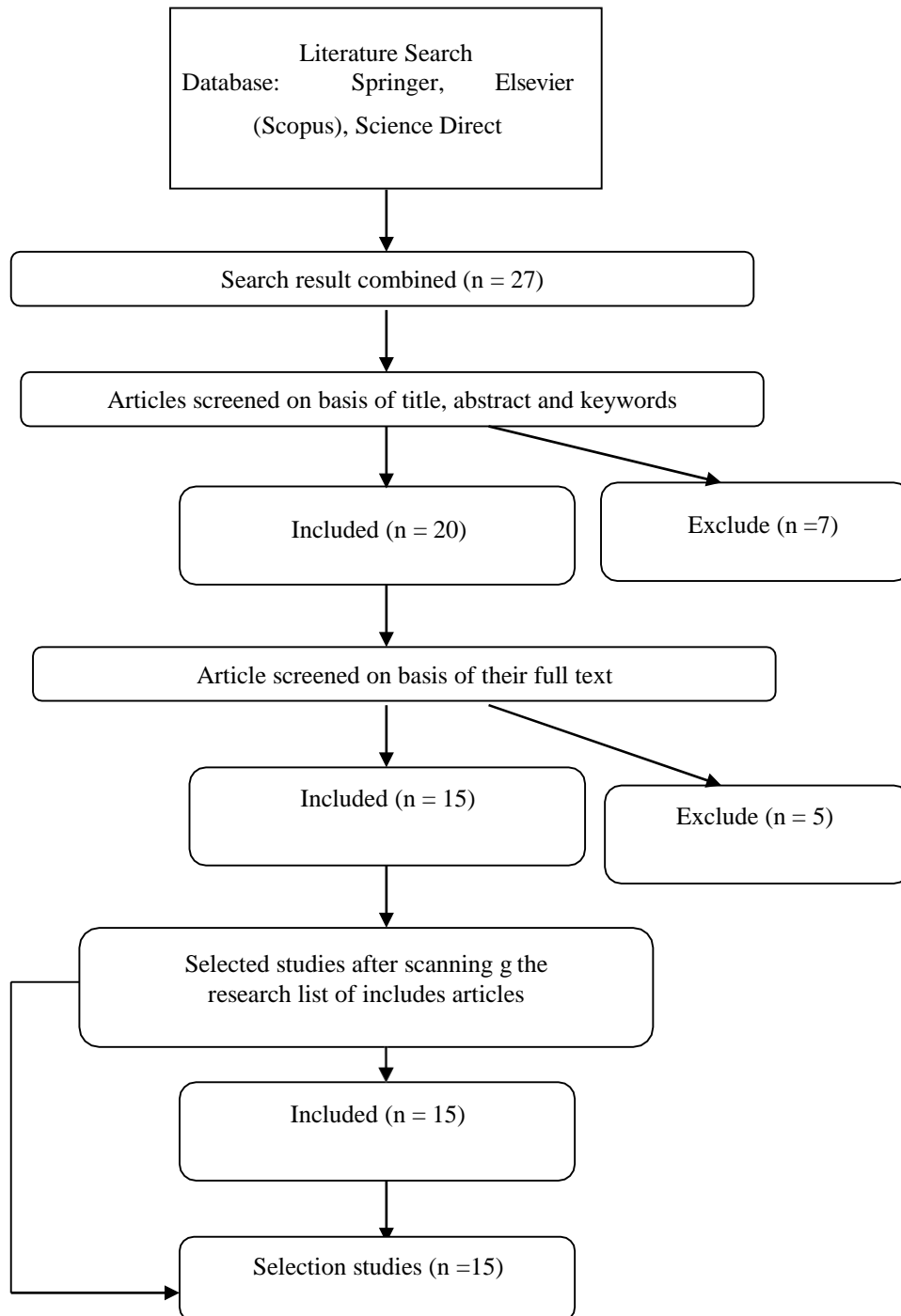
After identifying potential studies, you screen them for relevance based on predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria. This step usually involves reviewing titles, abstracts, and sometimes full texts to determine which studies meet the eligibility requirements. Studies that do not meet the criteria are excluded at this stage.

### **Eligibility**

In this phase, the full text of the studies that passed the screening process is reviewed in detail. The goal is to determine whether they meet the inclusion criteria and should be included in the systematic review. Further clarification or assessment might be needed if there are ambiguities or questions about the methodology.

### **Included Studies**

The final step is to include studies that pass the eligibility check. These studies are then used for data extraction, analysis, and synthesis. If the data from the studies are sufficiently comparable, this step may also involve conducting a meta-analysis.



**Figure 1. PRISMA guideline**

## RESULTS

Search results in the chosen database provide 27 studies written in English from 2018 to 2020, matching the keywords that need to be analyzed. Next, the articles are filtered by title, abstract, and keywords; the remaining 20 articles are reviewed based on the full text. A total of 7 articles were not included because they were not relevant to the topics to be discussed. Finally, 15 articles were selected for review without additional articles resulting from scanning the reference list. Based on the review results, most articles agree that parenting style impacts children's weight status, especially at school.

**Table 1. Distribution Of The Use Articles**

Category	Country	Number of Publication
Developed Country	Canada	2
	Finland	1
	USA	3
	Netherlands	1
	Minnesota	1
	South Australia	1
	Austria	1
Developed Country	China	1
	Indonesia	4

## DISCUSSION

Parenting is a complex collection of habits from parents to children in various aspects, including physical, verbal, and emotional displays of affection and negativity, monitoring, discipline, and so forth. There are three relevant theories in the parenting category: theories of what aspects of parenting are important for child development, theories that influence parenting, and theories of changes in ethics and habits in parenting (Kuppens and Ceulemans 2019). Parenting is a comprehensive term that refers to the overall attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors that parents show in their interactions with their children or children (Gadsden, Ford, and Breiner 2016). Over the past 60 years, parenting assessment has mainly focused on three categories: the centrality of the warmth and care of parents, the provision of structure, and the support of autonomy.

These categories are conceptualized into six dimensions when their relationship to child development is examined, including warmth, rejection, structure, disorder, coercion, and support for autonomy. Diana Baumrind defines several common parenting styles (Authoritative, Permissive, Authoritarian, and Neglectful) to capture the complexity of childcare styles and understand their effects on child development. Over the past 60 years, parenting assessment has mainly focused on three categories: the centrality of the warmth and care of parents, the provision of structure, and the support of autonomy. These categories are conceptualized into six dimensions when their relationship to child development is examined, including warmth, rejection, structure, disorder, coercion, and support for autonomy. To capture the complexity of childcare styles and understand their effects on child development, Diana Baumrind defines several common types of parenting styles (Authoritative, Permissive, Authoritarian, and Neglectful) based on two dimensions, namely the demands and responses of parents and several studies facilitate classification this is to overcome the relationship between parenting style and weight status (Rhee et al. 2013).

Parenting style is needed for children in school and pre-school because children still lack an understanding of the right food choices for their bodies (Gerards and Kremers 2015). Authoritarian (authoritarian) refers to parenting with high regulatory limitations but low levels of open communication. Authoritative parenting is an upbringing that is limited in regulation and high in communication. Authoritarian parenting is parenting that is weak in regulations and communication. Parents directly affect a child's access to healthy or unhealthy food, allowing or hindering physical activity and sedentary behavior at home (Patel et al., 2018). Parents are a key player in the prevention and treatment of weight-related problems.

An authoritative approach, characterized by having high demands on children's eating but being responsive to their preferences and needs, is associated with adequate dietary quality in pre-school children (Arlinghaus et al. 2018) and is therefore considered the optimal approach. However, less than a quarter of parents and grandparents in our study adopted this approach, suggesting a need to encourage both caregiver types to adopt this style. A previous review of grandparental feeding styles found that an indulgent feeding style was standard in grandparents who care for their preschool-aged grandchildren (Marr et al., 2021). However, no study in this review used a validated tool to measure feeding styles.

No significant differences were seen in this study for most assessed children's dietary intakes between the authoritative and the other three parenting styles, except for fruits. The results were consistent with our hypothesis and previous research, which found fruit consumption higher in children with

authoritative parents (Arlinghaus et al. 2018). A system review reported that an authoritative parenting style is important for a healthier dietary intake and for better child outcomes (e.g., school achievement and social adjustment) (Burnett et al. 2020).

There is a relationship between parenting and obesity in children. Children who are in foster care with a parenting style will tend to experience obesity of 1.1 to 1.4 times that of the children in foster care with a style of parenting (Tan et al. 2018). Several studies have shown that authoritative parenting is the least risky parenting model for a child's weight. (Ek et al., 2019). Parenting patterns are also associated with kea passage and the family of Chemish Kinan. Also, I am influenced by style in child care (Vollmer 2019).

On the other hand, excessive attention and involvement from parents can result in a higher risk of obesity and obesity among their children due to increased mental stress (Xu et al. 2013). In addition, the relationship between a permissive parenting style and obesity puts children at a higher risk for being overweight or obese, with studies that show a positive relationship between permissive parenting style and child BMI. High maternal parenting stress is related to an authoritarian feeding style. A style has been considered a predictor of childhood overweight obesity. It is recommended to continue studying those maternal factors that potentiate the risk of overweight-obesity in childhood, as well as interventions aimed at reducing parenting stress and the use of healthier feeding styles (Morales-Alducin et al. 2021).

Other research also found that *Responsive and Cooperative* families may lead to positive child outcomes (low food approach behavior, palatable food intake, and weight-related outcomes) due to highly authoritative parenting (Goodman, Roberts, and Musher-Eizenman 2020) and supportive co-parenting (Altenburger et al. 2017).

## CONCLUSIONS

Most of the studies reviewed agree that authoritative parenting is the best way to control children's weight status, although many other variables might affect this.

## RECOMMENDATION

Other research with more variables will be needed to prove that parenting feeding style is associated with weight status among children and that future interventions could work toward modifying or achieving an authoritative parenting style.

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