

Article

The Relationship between Perceived Parenting Styles and Youth Athletes' Sporting Achievement in Singapore

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Abstract: The role of parents is key to the success of youth athletes, but not much is known about the influence of parenting styles on sporting achievement in youth athletes. The present study aims to explore whether parents' perceived parenting style is associated with various areas of sporting achievement. Eighty-three Singaporean student athletes from various local educational institutes and sporting organisations completed an online survey assessing parenting styles (Parental Authority Questionnaire, PAQ) and various levels of sporting achievement (entry to national youth team; medalling at international youth competitions). Cluster analysis was first used to identify the different clusters of youth athletes according to their perceived parenting styles. Subsequent chi-square tests of independence were then conducted to identify whether there was a significant association between the parenting style clusters and different levels of sporting achievement. The results indicated that there were no significant associations between the perceived parenting styles and various areas of sporting achievement in youth athletes. Key takeaways from this study include the need to consider more complex and nuanced parenting style profiles; the cultural differences that youth athletes from Asian contexts might face; and the complexity of sporting achievement, which might not be explained by parenting styles in isolation.

Keywords: elite; youth sport; parenting styles; achievement; self-regulation; Asian culture

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1. Introduction

Elite athletes have been reported to possess certain psychological traits or capabilities such as resilience, focus, confidence, and motivation that have facilitated their development into world-class champions [1–3]. Sport psychology researchers seem to be of the opinion that key psychological characteristics relating to successful sporting outcomes can be developed over time under the right conditions [4,5]. While there is consensus that the skills and characteristics required for sporting excellence can be developed, what is less clear is the approach that should be taken to achieve this development. Apart from the explicit education and application of psychological skills training, more can be done to create an ideal environment to facilitate the growth and development of key psychological characteristics. Participation in sport does not automatically develop these skills and characteristics. Rather, social influences and carefully designed training objectives are key to unlocking psychological potential, and these factors should be embedded in the environment the athlete functions in [6].

The Holistic Ecological Approach (HEA) is focused on the entire environment an athlete develops in, and it is the inter-play between various factors within this environment that allows athletic talent to be harnessed optimally [7]. The HEA is built on two working models, one of which is the athletic talent development environment (ATDE) model [8]. In this model, the athlete is the focal point, and aspects of the ATDE are built into micro-

and macro-levels, across an athletic and non-athletic domain. The micro-level is concerned with the immediate environment (e.g., training or home environment) in which an athlete functions on a daily basis. The macro-level, on the other hand, relates to social settings, which affect but do not involve the athlete directly, including the cultural and societal norms. The athletic domain is directly concerned with the athlete's sports environment, whereas the non-athletic domain covers every other aspect of the athletes' lives. The outer layer of the model is dynamic, consisting of the past, present and future of the ATDE.

In a position paper on sporting parent expertise in youth sports, Harwood and Knight [9] suggested that a potential reason for the paucity of research on sporting parents' role is due to the lack of focus on parenting expertise. There has been much research on parents and sport in areas such as athletes' preferences regarding parental behaviour at competitions [10,11], coaches' perceptions of ideal and non-ideal parenting practices from the coach's perspective [12], different parenting styles and practices [13,14], and the parents' stressors, experiences, and emotions that arise from being involved in youth sport [15,16]. Nonetheless, there has not been much integration of the research conducted in these different strands into a conceptual understanding of optimal sport parenting expertise. Reviewing and appraising the current literature, Harwood and Knight [9] proposed six postulates that encompass youth sport parenting expertise, one of them being that parents recognize and implement an authoritative or autonomy-supportive parenting style.

1.1. Parenting Styles

Baumrind [17,18] proposed that parenting styles are generally based on two dimensions: acceptance/involvement, and control/autonomy giving. According to Baumrind, parents exhibit clear differences along the two dimensions of acceptance/involvement, and control and autonomy giving. Acceptance/responsiveness refers to "the extent to which parents intentionally foster individuality, self-regulation, and self-assertion by being attuned, supportive, and acquiescent to children's special needs and demands" [18] (p. 62). Control and autonomy giving refers to "the claims parents make on children to become integrated into the family whole, by their maturity demands, supervision, disciplinary efforts and willingness to confront the child who disobeys" [18] (pp. 61–62).

Based on these two dimensions, four types of parenting styles are possible: authoritative (high responsiveness and high control), authoritarian (high control and low responsiveness), permissive (high responsiveness and low control), and neglectful (low responsiveness and low control) [17–19]. A multitude of social and behavioural indicators presented by children and teenagers have been consistently associated with these four parental styles. An authoritative parenting style tends to develop children that exhibit higher confidence, social competence and achievements, while children with authoritarian parents have been associated with higher anxiety and immaturity levels, as well as antisocial behaviour. With permissive parenting, increased impulsiveness and aggressive behaviour and a decrease in social responsibility have been observed. Lastly, neglectful parenting leads to the fewest developments socially and emotionally, and has been linked to numerous forms of negative behaviour [18,20,21].

1.2. Parenting Styles and the Development of Psychological Characteristics

Empirical research evidence clearly indicates that parenting styles are associated with the development of a variety of psychological and psychosocial characteristics, such as self-efficacy and self-regulation. High responsiveness and parental control behaviours such as reason and support, the monitoring of the child's activities, and granting autonomy have been linked to greater self-efficacy, while negative parental behaviours such as the excessive use of punishments and a lack of control have been associated with lower self-efficacy [22–24]. It is likely that such behaviours are sources of self-efficacy beliefs through imitation and modelling, as well as verbal and social persuasion. In addition, these behaviours have been reported to promote a more internal locus of control; thus, individuals are more likely to relate their prior success and performance attainment to task

mastery rather than outcomes. This has been linked to greater and more stable self-efficacy beliefs, as control is firmly in the hands of the individual [25].

The effects of parenting styles on self-regulation are also well established [26–29]. Parental warmth, responsiveness, psychological control, and autonomy are parental behaviours that have been observed to influence self-regulation. For instance, parental warmth can be characterised by having parental support and an affective environment in the home setting, and these factors have been shown to be a significant predictor of increased self-regulation in the child [30]. Psychological control, on the other hand, is concerned with parents' socialisation efforts through the setting of rules, standards, and limits in the household. Higher levels of psychological control limit the child's opportunities to practice self-regulation as the parents are externally regulating their behaviours [31,32], and this may be related to the dimension of autonomy support.

1.3. Cultural Considerations for Parenting Styles

Researchers have identified two distinct classifications in terms of culture: individualism versus collectivism. Individualism tends to emphasise independence and autonomy, valuing personal achievements with high regard. Collectivism, on the other hand, prioritises group inter-connectedness and relationships over individual needs [33]. Western cultures are typically associated with an individualistic perspective, while Asian cultures are more collectivistic in nature. Individuals brought up in these cultures usually are inculcated with their associated beliefs and values [34], and this can be reflected in parenting practices. For instance, Western cultures view parenting behaviours that foster independent thinking and autonomy as important for ideal child development. Traditional Asian cultures, on the other hand, subscribe to harsh parent-centred socialisation practices whereby children are expected to submit to their parents [35]. Such behaviours and practices would fall under Baumrind's classification of an authoritative and authoritarian style of parenting, respectively [17].

1.4. Parenting Styles and Academic Achievement

A significant body of research has looked at the relationship between parenting styles and academic achievements [36–38]. In a study examining the predictive quality of parenting practices and parenting styles regarding the school achievements of 6626 Canadian children aged between 8 and 18 years, Areepattamannil found that parental beliefs, encouragement, and expectations were significant positive predictors of the children's achievements in school, while parental monitoring negatively predicted achievements. Parental beliefs were also observed to be positively linked to two dimensions of an authoritative parenting style (parental encouragement and parental monitoring). Similar findings were reported by Boon when investigating the differences between low and high achievers among 879 grade 8–10 Australian students. She found that an authoritative style of parenting predicted high achievements through self-efficacy and mastery goals while simultaneously offering a protective against self-handicapping. Conversely, low achievers were characterised by neglectful parenting, reduced self-efficacy and mastery goals, as well as higher levels of self-handicapping.

Pinquart [39] conducted a meta-analysis of 308 empirical studies looking at the association of parenting styles and dimensions with academic achievements in children and adolescents. His analysis revealed a small association between an authoritative parenting style and a better academic performance in terms of grade point average or achievement tests, both concurrently and in longitudinal research studies. This positive association with academic performance was also observed for other parenting dimensions such as behavioural control, responsiveness, and autonomy-giving. Authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful parenting styles, along with the dimensions of psychological control and severe parental control, were associated with lower academic achievements, and these range from small to very small effect sizes.

In view of the research work presented, it is evident that there is, at the very least, a small indication that an authoritative style of parenting enables children and adolescents to achieve a better academic performance compared to the other parenting styles. It has been hypothesised that this is due to the high responsiveness and high control that characterises the authoritative style of parenting, and because it is linked to the adoption of adaptive achievement strategies exemplified by enhanced critical thinking and independent problem-solving skills, a low expectation of failure, a reduction in irrelevant task behaviours, as well as reduced passivity [31,40,41]. It is highly likely that these strategies are underpinned by certain key psychological attributes such as self-efficacy and self-regulation. Both of these attributes have been identified in sporting research as critical factors for optimal athlete development [4,5]. They have also been reported by researchers as a significant differentiator of athletes at the youth elite and sub-elite levels [42].

1.5. Parenting Styles in Sport

In sport psychology research, little research has been conducted on parenting styles and their influence on sporting outcomes, though extant research in the achievement and education settings has provided strong empirical evidence that an authoritative style of parenting is associated with a multitude of positive behavioural characteristics and outcomes [39,40]. Anecdotally, we read of famous examples of “sporting parents”, such as Andy Murray’s mother Judy Murray [43] or the Williams sisters’ father Richard Williams [44], who had a profound effect on their children’s sporting achievements. One would expect that such characteristics would be transferable to the sport domain.

Despite the paucity of research investigating the effects of parenting styles in sport, there have been attempts to investigate this relationship. For instance, Juntumaa et al. [45] looked at the influence of different parenting styles in relation to outcomes such as norm-breaking behaviours, sports satisfaction, and achievement strategies in 1018 Finnish ice-hockey players between the ages of 14–16 years. Players that were exposed to an authoritative parenting style reported fewer incidences of norm-breaking behaviour, higher displays of mastery-oriented behaviour, and the derivation of more sport satisfaction. Conversely, players that were exposed to an authoritarian style were more likely to display norm-breaking behaviour. In another study, Holt et al. [13] used a combination of fieldwork observations and interviews with youth female footballers and their parents throughout an entire season to better comprehend the effects of parenting styles and practices within youth sport. They found that parents that displayed an authoritative style of parenting gave their child the opportunity to make decisions, were more open with their communications, and understood their child’s mood compared to parents that exhibited a more controlling parenting style.

More recently, Teques et al. [46] assessed the associations between perceived parenting practices/behaviours (instruction, role-modelling, reinforcement, and encouragement) and the psychological variables (intrinsic motivation, self-regulation, and self-efficacy) of sub-elite and elite youth athletes. The findings seem to indicate that perceived encouragement had a significantly strong effect on the intrinsic motivation of elite as opposed to sub-elite athletes. Additionally, parental role-modelling was a significant predictor of performance levels, intrinsic motivation, and self-regulation. These findings were in line with the model of parental involvement in sport, which identified that parental behaviours such as role-modelling, reinforcement, encouragement and technical instruction have a significant influence on four key psychological attributes that are linked to high athletic achievement. These attributes consist of self-regulatory strategies, intrinsic motivation, self-efficacy, and the social ability to relate to the coach [47,48]. It is evident from the research presented that some forms of parenting styles are associated with the development of certain positive psychosocial characteristics and behaviours in youth athletes. Some of these characteristics include self-regulation [49], resilience [2], and emotional intelligence [50], all of which have been significantly linked to elite sport performance. There is strong reason to believe that

parenting styles can have a significant influence on athletic development, and by extension, sporting performance.

1.6. Aims of Present Study

Nonetheless, more research needs to be conducted to investigate the linkage between parenting styles and sporting performance [9]; since the publication of the position paper, there has been a lack of studies seeking to examine parenting styles/practices and sport performance outcomes, e.g., [46]. Thus, the present study is an attempt to further bolster the extant research on parenting styles and sport achievement. The overarching aim of the present research is to determine whether certain perceived parenting styles are associated with different levels of sporting achievement in Singapore youth athletes. This will be examined in two parts: First, this study will aim to investigate whether perceived parenting style is associated with membership of the national youth team in a sample of youth athletes. Second, this study will aim to investigate whether perceived parenting style is associated with winning of medals at international competitions (Asian/world level) among national youth team members. (In the context of Singapore, being on the national youth team and winning medals at Asian or World youth competitions are objective indicators of sport achievement at youth level).

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Participants

A convenience sample of student athletes from institutes of higher education, as well as from various national sports associations in Singapore between the ages of 16–25 years, were recruited to participate in the present study. Participants were recruited from these organisations because they were representative of the target population, i.e., athletes within the age range required. The exclusion criteria were athletes who were/are victims of domestic abuse or were not brought up by biological/adoptive parents. These criteria were set as the investigators felt that such cases would inevitably skew the responses in a negative manner. The purpose and nature of the study were fully disclosed to the participants, who were informed that they could withdraw their responses at any point in time without any penalty or consequences. Data collection only proceeded once informed consent was provided. All procedures were approved by the local research ethics committee, Singapore Sport Institute.

A total of 83 student athletes, with a mean age of 20 years ($SD = 3$), participated in the study. In terms of gender, there were 56 female and 27 male participants. The sports that the participants competed in were as follows: archery (1), badminton (2), basketball (12), beach volleyball (1), canoe polo (1), canoe (2), fencing (5), floorball (1), kayak (4), netball (4), weightlifting (3), sailing (7), shooting (8), soccer (2), softball (1), sports climbing (3), squash (4), swimming (1), table-tennis (2), tenpin bowling (2), track and field (7), ultimate frisbee (2), volleyball (2), water polo (5), and windsurfing (1). The gender distributions across sports can be found in Appendix A. There were no dropouts nor were any participants omitted due to incomplete responses, missing datasets, or methodological concerns.

2.2. Procedure

Prospective participants were recruited via a variety of online mediums (social media, emails, chat groups) across a period of three months (August 2019–October 2019). All details, informed consent, and questionnaire responses were solely collected online. The survey sequence was structured in the following progressive manner: (1) research study information; (2) consent form; (3) participant information; (4) achievements; (5) significant parental involvement; and (6) perceived parenting style. Depending on their response to part 5, the participants could answer part 6 twice if both parents were deemed to be significantly involved in their sport. Participants were instructed to complete the questionnaire by themselves, and preferably alone. They were also encouraged to contact

the relevant personnel/hotlines if they encountered any negative consequences whilst responding to the survey. The setup of the survey and the mode of response collection ensured that data privacy and confidentiality were firmly established.

2.3. Data Confidentiality and Protection

To ensure that the participants could not be identified personally, they were not required to put their names on the questionnaire. Instead, they were asked to provide the initials of their full name, along with the last two digits of their year of birth. This information then served as a record identifier. In the event that a participant decided to withdraw from the study, the identifier would be used to locate their data for removal. Only the principal researcher had access to the data, and they were stored electronically in an encrypted folder on a password-protected laptop. All data would be kept for a period of seven years, after which they would be destroyed.

2.4. Measures

2.4.1. Participant Information

Participants were asked to provide the following: (a) record identifier; (b) current age; (c) gender; (d) main sport; and (e) years in the sport.

2.4.2. Sport Achievement

To obtain an indication of their achievements in sport, participants were asked three questions: (L1) were they part of any national youth team; (L2) have they represented their country at any Asian/World youth or junior competitions; and (L3) have they won any medals at such competitions, with a yes or no response. The questions provided three progressive levels of achievement to be recorded, with question three being the highest achievement and question one being the lowest.

2.4.3. Perceived Parental Styles

The parental authority questionnaire (PAQ) [51] was employed to determine participants' perception of parenting styles. The questionnaire was designed to measure Baumrind's [17] authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive parenting styles from an adolescents' point of view. The questionnaire consists of 30 items (10 items for each parenting style), each measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree and 5 = strongly agree) that suitably describes how a particular item relates to him/her. Participants were instructed to respond to the PAQ only for parental figures that played roles in their development. Specifically, the questionnaire's instructions state that "depending on your personal home circumstances you may complete forms for both or either parent figure". For example, if participants did not feel that they had a father figure during their development, they would leave the PAQ father questions blank, or if they came from a single-parent family, they would only need to respond to one part of the questionnaire. The minimum and maximum scores for each parenting style ranged from 10 to 50, respectively, and an average of both parents' styles were used as the overall scores; higher scores indicated the greater use of a particular parenting style as experienced by the child. Researchers have shown the PAQ to be reliable and valid [52]. In the study, the Cronbach alpha values for the PAQ subscales were as follows: permissive (0.78), authoritarian (0.89), authoritative (0.83).

2.4.4. Data Analysis

The data analysis involved two separate analyses: (1) A cluster analysis with the whole 83-participant sample, and a subsequent chi-square test of independence to determine whether the parenting style cluster was associated with membership of the national youth team. (2) A cluster analysis with only the participants who were members of the national youth team ($n = 57$), and a subsequent chi-square test of independence to determine whether the parenting style cluster was associated with medal(s) at international competitions. Both

instances utilised the same two-step approach outlined below, and all analyses were conducted using SPSS 23.0.

Firstly, cluster analysis was used to identify the different parenting style clusters that existed within the sample based on the participants' PAQ responses. The cluster analysis was conducted in two steps: Firstly, hierarchical clustering was conducted to determine the optimal number of clusters based on the sample. This was performed by analysing the agglomeration schedule and dendrogram. The three subscales of the PAQ were used as the clustering variables, and Ward's method with squared Euclidean distance was used to determine the number of clusters. Secondly, k-means clustering was used to refine the clusters and verify the results of the hierarchical clustering. Based on the final cluster centres produced by the k-means clustering, each cluster was labelled according to the dominant parenting style(s) that typified the individuals in each cluster. This two-step cluster analytical approach was performed twice: (1) with the entire 83-participant sample, and (2) with only the participants who were members of the national youth team ($n = 57$).

In the next stage of data analysis, a series of chi-square tests of independence were carried out to determine whether there were any relationships between the parenting style cluster and various indicators of sporting achievement (e.g., membership in the national youth team, medals at international competitions). In the first instance, the clusters that emerged from the first cluster analysis (i.e., using the entire 83-participant sample) were used in a chi-square test of independence to determine whether the type of parenting style cluster was associated with membership of the national youth team. In the second instance, the clusters that emerged from the second cluster analysis (i.e., the 57 participants who were on the national youth team) were used in a separate chi-square test of independence to determine whether the type of parenting style cluster was associated with their ability to win medals at international competitions.

3. Results

3.1. Parenting Style and National Youth Team Membership

3.1.1. Cluster Analysis 1: Whole Sample

The first cluster analysis was performed with the entire sample of 83 participants. There were no missing values in the data and all 83 participants were included in the analysis. A hierarchical cluster analysis was first run, and upon inspection of the agglomeration schedule, it was decided that the merging of a two-cluster solution to a one-cluster solution provided a greater change in coefficients (103.89%) compared to previous mergers (28.43% and less). As such, the two-cluster solution was deemed to be the most optimal for this sample, and this was supported by an inspection of the dendrogram plot. After running k-means clustering, it was found that 96% of the participants remained in the same cluster, which gave credence to the validity and stability of the results. Based on the final cluster centres of each cluster (which can be found in Table 1), Cluster 1 was labelled "high permissive/authoritative", and Cluster 2 was labelled "high authoritarian".

Table 1. Final cluster centres for cluster analysis 1 (whole sample).

PAQ Subscale	Cluster 1	Cluster 2
Permissive	31.59	21.88
Authoritarian	24.68	36.98
Authoritative	37.65	28.25

3.1.2. Chi-Square Test of Independence 1: Whole Sample

Following the first cluster analysis, a chi-square test of independence was performed to assess whether there was any relationship between cluster membership (i.e., "high permissive/authoritative" or "high authoritarian") and membership of the national youth team (see Figure 1). The results indicated that there was no significant relationship between

the two variables, $X^2(1, 83) = 0.15, p = 0.70$. In addition, Cramer's $V = 0.042$, which indicated a very weak relationship.

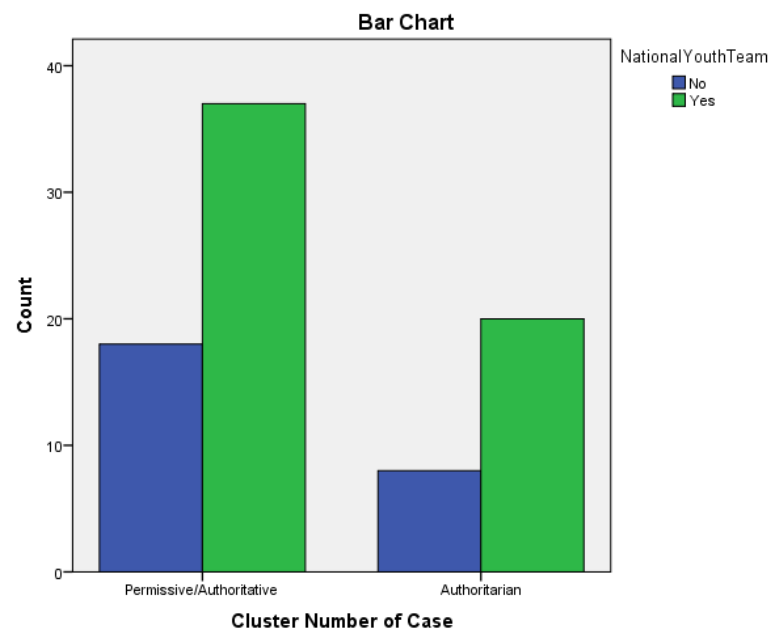


Figure 1. Bar chart depicting relationship between parenting style and membership of the national youth team.

3.2. Parenting Style and Medal(s) at International Competition

3.2.1. Cluster Analysis 2: National Youth Team Members Only

The second cluster analysis was performed with the participants who were members of the national youth team ($n = 57$). There were no missing values in the data and all 57 participants were included in the analysis. A hierarchical cluster analysis was first run, and upon inspection of the agglomeration schedule, it was decided that the merging of a two-cluster solution to a one-cluster solution provided a greater change in coefficients (131.51%) compared to previous mergers (23.99% and less). As such, the two-cluster solution was deemed to be the most optimal for this sample, and this was supported by an inspection of the dendrogram plot. After running k-means clustering, it was found that 100% of participants remained in the same cluster, which gave credence to the validity and stability of the results. Based on the final cluster centres of each cluster (which can be found in Table 2), Cluster 1 was labelled “high permissive/authoritative”, and Cluster 2 was labelled “high authoritarian”.

Table 2. Final cluster centres for cluster analysis 2 (national youth team members only).

PAQ Subscale	Cluster 1	Cluster 2
Permissive	31.97	22.05
Authoritarian	24.19	36.30
Authoritative	38.22	27.35

3.2.2. Chi-Square Test of Independence 2: National Youth Team Members Only

Following the first cluster analysis, a chi-square test of independence was performed to assess whether there was any relationship between cluster membership (i.e., “high permissive/authoritative” or “high authoritarian”) and the participants’ ability to win medal(s) at international competitions (see Figure 2). The results indicated that there was no significant relationship between the two variables, $X^2(1, 57) = 0.026, p = 0.87$. In addition, Cramer's $V = 0.021$, which indicated a very weak relationship.

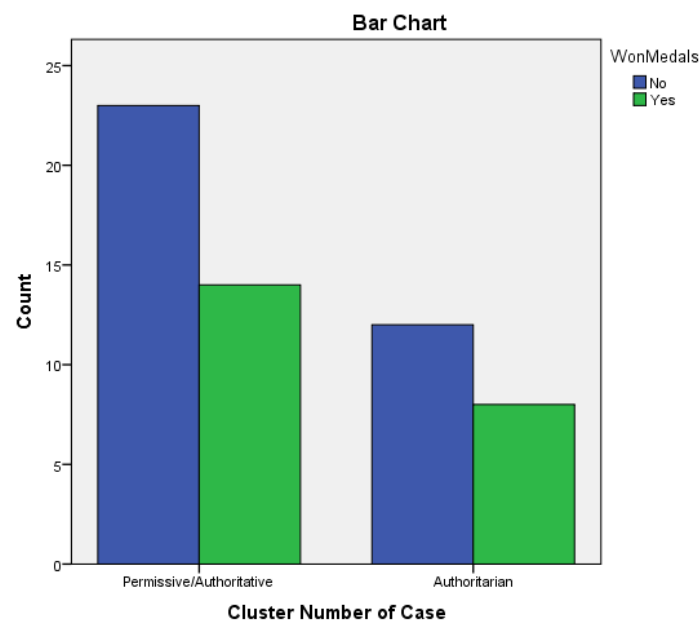


Figure 2. Bar chart depicting relationship between parenting style and medal(s) at international competition.

4. Discussion

The aim of the present research was to explore the influence of perceived parenting styles on youth athletes' sporting achievement. Specifically, it aimed to explore the following: (1) whether the perceived parenting style was associated with membership of the national youth team, and (2) whether the perceived parenting style was associated with medal(s) won at international competitions. The results indicated that there were no significant relationships observed in either case.

Despite the non-significant findings, there are several important areas of discussion that can be gleaned from this study. First, the cluster analysis method used in this study was relatively novel to the domain of parenting style research in youth sport. Past research has attempted to categorise individuals according to a singular/dominant parental style (e.g., authoritative). However, the results from the cluster analysis employed in this study suggest that there can be a "mixture" of parenting styles present within a single individual. For example, the cluster analysis found that one cluster of youth athletes perceived a high permissive/authoritative parenting style. While this may seem contradictory due to the permissive parenting style being associated with negative outcomes and the authoritative parent style being associated with positive outcomes, it speaks to the complexity and nuance that is present in youth athletes' perception of their parent(s)' parenting style. This is supported by research by Kuppens and Ceulemans [53], who also used cluster analysis to create parenting style "profiles", instead of rigidly adhering to Baumrind's [17,18] typology. Upon deeper inspection of the PAQ used in this study, there do seem to be certain similarities between certain questions in the permissive and authoritative subscales. For example, question 1 ("while I was growing up my mother felt that in a well-run home the children should have their way in the family as often as the parents do") belongs to the permissive subscale, and question 5 ("my mother has always encouraged verbal give-and-take whenever I have felt that family rules and restrictions were unreasonable") belongs to the authoritative subscale, but both have elements of allowing children to have autonomy in the rules and decision-making process. Apart from that, it is also possible for parents to employ different parenting styles depending on the context and situation that the child is in, which could create an amalgamation of multiple parenting styles within the child's eyes. In view of this, future research needs to consider that there might be more complex and

nuanced parenting style profiles, where certain individuals might simultaneously perceive two parenting styles as being dominant.

A second key area of discussion is the cultural context in which this study is situated (i.e., the Asian context). Most of the past literature on youth sport parenting styles has been conducted in Western settings, e.g., [9,13,54], with little research being conducted in an Asian context. There are several key cultural/societal influences associated with an Asian society that might help explain the non-significant findings. Traditional Asian cultures are known to be more collectivistic in nature, and this is reflected in the high degree of control in parenting practices [35]. Chinese parents, for example, are firm believers in the importance of exercising parental control and the strict monitoring of behaviours, whilst simultaneously demonstrating involvement, support, and concern for their children [55]. Similar parental practices have also been reported for Indian parents [56]. Based on Baumrind's classifications [17], such practices would fall under the authoritarian style of parenting. Nonetheless, an individual's beliefs and values may not always be fully attributed to the prevailing culture they reside in, i.e., being brought up in an individualistic culture but also possessing collectivistic values, and this can be due to one's parental upbringing during their formative years [57]. A classic example is the "tiger mum" phenomenon observed in certain western cultures, whereby Chinese immigrant parents are known to enforce strict parental control and high expectations of excellence upon their offspring [57]. Researchers have observed that such parenting practices are associated with better academic outcomes in Asian-American adolescents than in their white American counterparts [58–60]. One would expect then that Singaporean parents, being part of a multi-racial Asian society, whose population is predominantly Chinese but also includes Indians, coupled with traditional societal notions that place a premium on a quality education [61], would be more likely to adopt an authoritarian style of parenting.

An assumption is being made here that the negative consequences of an authoritarian parenting style are similar regardless of culture and beliefs, even though much of the research has been conducted in Western cultures and countries. Yet, there are two pertinent issues that affect this assumption. Firstly, the research literature has found inconsistencies linking an authoritarian parenting style with sub-optimal psychosocial and academic outcomes, particularly in relation to Asian populations. Second, there is a dearth of empirical research examining the relationship between an authoritarian style of parenting and its associated psychosocial developmental outcomes in a purely Asian context [62]. The limited research that does exist appears to be equivocal, with studies reporting both positive, e.g., [63], and negative effects, e.g., [64], in relation to an authoritarian style of parenting.

A reason that has been proposed to explain these discrepancies in terms of the outcomes associated with authoritarian parenting is a differential understanding of the meaning of authoritarianism that is based on culture. From a white-American/white-European perspective, "strictness" is typically linked to certain negative features such as parental hostility, aggression and dominance. Asians, on the other hand, view "strictness" and some aspects of "control" as correlates of positive features such as parental concern, caring or involvement [63,65]. Thus, in the present research study, the lack of significance at the higher levels of achievement could perhaps be attributed to the misinterpretation of the authoritarian parenting style and its "perceived" development of negative psychosocial outcomes, without taking into consideration the Asian context. For future studies, it would be ideal to include psychosocial indicators in tandem with parental styles to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between these two variables.

Another possible explanation could be the prevalent societal/cultural pressures that prevent youth athletes from investing more time and effort into their sporting endeavours. From a socio-cultural perspective, Singaporeans have traditionally defined success and wealth in material terms [66]. As such, many parents and older-generation adults subscribe to the notion that a good education is important in building a successful future, as it typically leads to a well-paying job, thus conferring greater financial prowess. Such pragmatic thinking has led to sport being viewed as an undesirable career choice as it does not equate

to economic wealth, at least in the context of Singapore [67]. This is reflected in the early political narrative that focused on building fit and healthy citizens through sports and viewed the pursuit of sporting excellence as a waste of resources [68]. However, government policies have shifted in recent years, as is evident from the numerous investments in sporting infrastructures and government programmes that have been implemented to provide substantial financial support to aspiring athletes [68,69]. Despite this shift, it is likely that many parents and their offspring still hold on to the traditional view that sport is not a viable career option, and thus choose not to invest more personal resources in this way to obtain further performance outcomes but instead focus their energy on academics. One way to ascertain whether this is true may be to examine athletes' concurrent academic results/achievements or measure the time they allocate to both sporting and academic pursuits. Additionally, qualitative methods of inquiry such as interviews can be employed to better understand youth athletes' career goals and aspirations.

Finally, it might be overly simplistic to attribute sporting achievement to the parenting styles of youth athletes. This is due to the complexity of producing high-performance outcomes. Performance is typically multi-dimensional in nature, and a variety of factors other than having the desired psychological characteristics or skills have to come together for an athlete to produce a potential match/game-winning performance. In a study examining the factors affecting Olympic performance in teams, Gould and colleagues [70] conducted interviews with eight US teams that competed at the 1996 Atlanta Summer Olympics. They found that oftentimes issues such as coach-athlete relationships, team dynamics, mental preparation, and family/crowd support differentiated successful and unsuccessful performances. Coach-athlete relations, for instance, have consistently been shown to be an important determinant of optimal athlete development and performance, e.g., in [71,72], and it can be argued that this aspect is independent of the influence of parenting styles.

Similarly, Burns et al. [1] reported that a championship performance is most likely produced when psychological attributes, successful performance plans, supportive relationships, and lifestyle intersect. Nonetheless, they did find that having certain psychological attributes such as high levels of self-regulation and self-efficacy were deemed by elite athletes to be a major contributing success factor, though these attributes were not specifically mentioned in relation to parenting styles. According to Bandura's theory [73], prior success and performance attainment is deemed the most effective source information for self-efficacy beliefs. Typically, in sport, outcome results such as win/loss, positions in competition, and rankings are the markers of athletes' confidence in their own ability. However, in sport, athletes often have minimal control over the final outcomes and if their self-efficacy beliefs are linked heavily to results, a lack of confidence will become a major problem. Parenting styles, in this regard, can be crucial in the development of more process-related attributions that focus on aspects such as effort and the mastery of skills that are firmly in the control of the individual, thereby redefining how success and failure are perceived.

4.1. Limitations

There were several limitations that may have affected the findings of this study. The relatively small sample size ($n = 83$) may have contributed to a lack of significance. For instance, 845 youth athletes participated in the study by Teques et al. [46], while 194 male youth soccer players participated in the study by Sapieja et al. [14]. Thus, a bigger participant pool for the current study may have yielded more significant findings.

Given the exploratory nature of the present research, the decision was made to keep measurements to a minimum and look only at parenting styles and achievement. However, this meant that the findings could not be analysed in greater depth. The inclusion of other variables such as self-efficacy and self-regulation would certainly have bolstered the findings, especially considering that both these variables have been strongly associated with superior sporting performances. Moreover, the addition of these variables may help

researchers to further understand the “true” impact of various parenting styles on the development of psychosocial characteristics when culture is taken into context.

Another potential limitation that may have influenced the results is the broadness of the measure of achievement in terms of participation and the winning of medals at major Asian/world youth competitions. For some sports such as badminton and table tennis, the competitive level is traditionally high in Asia; thus, achievements at Asian competitions could be comparable to world competitions. Nonetheless, these sports only represent a small percentage of the sports (9%) that were being sampled in the present study. Hence, combining Asian and world-level competitions may have diluted the strength of the relationship regarding parenting styles. Moreover, even within an Asian competition itself, certain sports, due to their popularity and stature, will inevitably have higher standards of entry compared to less conventional sports; yet, in the current method of assessment, they will be accorded the same level of achievement. Future research may want to ensure that the sports it samples from are of a similar standard across the regional level, and to differentiate between Asian and world competitions.

Lastly, the age range could have confounded the findings to some degree. Youth and junior competitions are restricted to a maximum age limit of under 21 years, but one-third of the current sample included athletes who were up to the age of 25. This meant that these athletes were responding to the perceived parenting styles questionnaire retrospectively, and thus their responses may not have been as accurate due to the possibility of recall error [74]. This issue can be circumvented by sampling only from athletes who are currently involved with youth and junior-level competitions.

4.2. Practical Implications

The findings of the present study may enable various stakeholders within the sporting ecosystem that identify, manage, and develop athletic talent to make more informed decisions. Sporting organisations with limited resources may invest their efforts in potential youth athletes more judiciously. By screening not only based on physical and technical characteristics, as is often the case currently, but also through the parenting style that one is brought up with, coaches and administrators could indirectly attempt to look at the key psychosocial characteristics required for optimal talent development, a neglected aspect that has been championed fervently by MacNamara and colleagues [4,75].

Parents involved or wishing to get involved in sport would benefit from greater awareness of the different parenting styles and their impact on psychosocial characteristics, as well as their relationship with sporting achievement. The acquisition of such knowledge hopefully would enable parents to adjust their current parenting behaviours accordingly to ensure that their child develops optimally in their sport. This could come in the form of education content/material or engagement workshops that are designed and delivered by sports scientists, coaches, and schoolteachers. Successful athletes and their parents could also be invited to share their experiences; role-modelling is one of the sources of information able to increase self-efficacy beliefs and thus inspire other parents to believe that they too could follow suit.

5. Conclusions

This study sought to explore the influence of perceived parenting styles on youth athletes’ sporting achievement. In particular, it aimed to determine (1) whether the perceived parenting style was associated with membership of the national youth team, and (2) whether the perceived parenting style was associated with medal(s) won at international competitions. The results of this study indicated that there were no significant relationships observed in either case. Key takeaways from this study include the need to consider more complex and nuanced parenting style profiles; the cultural differences that youth athletes from Asian contexts might face; and the complexity of sporting achievement, which might not be explained by parenting styles in isolation. The current study adds to the body of

knowledge as it addresses the lack of studies seeking to examine parenting styles and sporting outcomes, and is one of the first to do so in the Asian context.

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Data Availability Statement: The data presented in this study are available upon request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy and confidentiality reasons.

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Appendix A. Gender Distribution across Sports

Sport	Males (n = 27)	Females (n = 56)
Archery	1	0
Athletics	4	3
Badminton	0	2
Basketball	1	11
Beach Volleyball	0	1
Canoe Polo	0	1
Canoeing	1	1
Fencing	3	2
Floorball	0	1
Kayaking	4	0
Netball	0	4
Olympic weightlifting	1	2
Sailing	2	5
shooting	1	7
Soccer	2	0
Softball	0	1
Sport Climbing	2	1
Squash	2	2
Swimming	1	0
Table Tennis	1	1
Tenpin Bowling	0	2
Ultimate Frisbee	1	1
Volleyball	0	2
Waterpolo	0	5
Windsurfing	0	1

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