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## PARENTING STYLE AS UPASHAYA IN NEUROLOGICAL DEFICIT CHILDREN: A REVIEW STUDY

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### ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** Neurological disorders are a major cause of disability in children, affecting cognitive, motor, sensory, and behavioural functioning and significantly impacting quality of life and caregiver well-being [1,4,19]. Parenting style is a modifiable environmental factor influencing behavioural and emotional outcomes in children with neurological deficits [2,3,18]. **Methods:** This narrative review analyzed classical Ayurvedic texts describing *Upashaya–Anupashaya*, *Achara*, and *Manas* [5–8,15], along with contemporary scientific literature on parenting styles and psychosocial outcomes in children with neurological and neurodevelopmental disorders [2,3,11–14,16–18]. **Results:** The review found that authoritative parenting and balanced permissive parenting were consistently associated with improved emotional regulation, adaptive behaviour, social competence, and coping skills in children with neurological deficits [2,12,14,21–25]. In contrast, authoritarian and negative parenting styles were associated with increased behavioural problems, emotional dysregulation, anxiety, and caregiver–child conflict [3,11,14,22]. **Discussion:** Parenting style can be interpreted as a non-pharmacological *Upashaya*, influencing behavioural and emotional outcomes in children with neurological deficits. Integrating evidence-based parenting approaches with Ayurvedic principles provides a holistic framework for long-term child development and caregiver support.

**KEYWORDS:** Neurological deficits; Parenting style; *Upashaya–Anupashaya*; Child behaviour; Psychosocial intervention.

## INTRODUCTION

Neurological disorders in children represent a broad spectrum of conditions affecting the central and peripheral nervous systems. These disorders may manifest as epilepsy, cerebral palsy, developmental delay, intellectual disability, autism spectrum disorder, learning difficulties, and sensory or motor impairments [1,4,9,19]. According to global health reports, neurological disorders are a major contributor to long-term disability and reduced quality of life [1].

Children with neurological deficits often experience difficulties in communication, emotional regulation, social interaction, and adaptive behaviour [10,19,20]. Alongside medical management and rehabilitation, the psychosocial environment of the child plays a crucial role in shaping developmental outcomes. Among environmental factors, parenting style is one of the most influential determinants of a child's behavior and emotional health [2,3,18].

In Ayurveda, *Upashaya* refers to factors that relieve disease or improve symptoms, while *Anupashaya* denotes factors that aggravate the condition [5]. These principles are traditionally applied in diagnosis and treatment planning through observation of responses to diet (*Ahara*), lifestyle (*Vihara*), and behaviour (*Achara*) [5-7]. Parenting style, though not explicitly named in classical texts, can be understood as a form of *Achara Upashaya*, influencing mental balance (*Satva*), behaviour (*Achara*), and neurodevelopment in children [6-8,15].

This review attempts to conceptualize parenting style as *Upashaya* in children with neurological deficits, integrating contemporary psychological theories with Ayurvedic diagnostic and therapeutic principles.

## AIM

To review and analyze the role of parenting style as *Upashaya* in children with neurological deficits.

## OBJECTIVES

- The objectives of this review are to understand different parenting styles and their impact on child behaviour [2,3,18];
- to correlate parenting styles with behavioural outcomes in children with neurological deficits [14,21–23];
- to interpret parenting style through the Ayurvedic concept of *Upashaya–Anupashaya* [5–7];

- to emphasize positive parenting as a supportive, non-pharmacological therapeutic measure in neurological disorders [12,25,26].

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This narrative review was conducted through a structured analysis of classical Ayurvedic texts and contemporary scientific literature. Classical sources included *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, and *Kashyapa Samhita*, focusing on *Upashaya–Anupashaya*, *Achara*, *Sadvritta*, *Manas*, and child development (*Bala Chikitsa*) [5–8,15].

Modern literature was retrieved from databases such as PubMed, Google Scholar, Scopus, and Medline using keywords including *parenting style*, *authoritative parenting*, *neurological disorders in children*, *neurodevelopmental disorders*, and *psychosocial interventions*. Peer-reviewed original articles and reviews related to cerebral palsy, autism spectrum disorder, ADHD, epilepsy, and intellectual disability were included [9–14,19–26]. Parenting styles were classified according to Baumrind’s typology and its later extensions [2,18]. Findings were qualitatively synthesized and interpreted through the Ayurvedic framework of *Upashaya–Anupashaya*.

### **Parenting Styles and Impact on Neurological Deficit Children**

Parenting style refers to the emotional climate and behavioural strategies adopted by parents while raising their children [2,3]. In children with neurological deficits, parenting practices exert a profound influence on emotional regulation, adaptive behaviour, and social functioning [21–23].

#### **Authoritative Parenting**

Authoritative parenting combines emotional warmth, responsiveness, and consistent behavioural expectations. Extensive research demonstrates that this parenting style is associated with improved emotional regulation, social competence, adaptive functioning, and reduced behavioural problems in children, including those with neurological and developmental disorders [2,12,14,21,24,25].

Children with neurological deficits benefit from the predictable yet supportive environment created by authoritative parenting, which enhances emotional security and coping abilities. From an Ayurvedic perspective, such parenting supports *Satva Guna*, promoting mental stability and resilience, and may therefore be interpreted as *Upashaya* [5–7].

### **Authoritarian Parenting**

Authoritarian parenting emphasizes strict discipline, obedience, and control, often with limited emotional responsiveness [3]. Studies have consistently linked this style with increased anxiety, fear, emotional suppression, and behavioural disturbances, particularly in children with neurodevelopmental vulnerabilities [11,14,22].

In neurologically challenged children, authoritarian parenting may intensify stress responses and impair emotional adaptability. Ayurveda interprets such effects as aggravation of *Rajas* and *Tamas*, contributing to mental imbalance, thereby classifying authoritarian parenting as *Anupashaya* [5,6].

### **Permissive Parenting**

Permissive parenting is characterized by high emotional warmth with limited structure or discipline [2]. While this approach may provide emotional comfort and encourage expression, excessive permissiveness has been associated with difficulties in impulse control, behavioural regulation, and consistency, especially in children with neurological impairments [9,13,21].

When balanced with guidance, permissive parenting may function as *Upashaya*; however, unstructured permissiveness may become *Anupashaya*, highlighting the importance of moderation and individualized parenting strategies [10,18].

## **RESULTS**

The reviewed literature demonstrates that parenting style significantly influences behavioural, emotional, and adaptive outcomes in children with neurological deficits [2,14,21–23]. Authoritative parenting consistently showed positive associations with emotional stability, adaptive behaviour, and reduced behavioural problems [2,12,25]. Balanced permissive parenting supported emotional well-being, whereas authoritarian and negative parenting styles were associated with increased psychological stress and behavioural disturbances [11,14,22]. These findings support the interpretation of parenting style as an important non-pharmacological *Upashaya–Anupashaya* factor.

## **DISCUSSION**

Neurological deficits require long-term, multidisciplinary management integrating medical, rehabilitative, psychological, and family-centered interventions [1,9]. Parenting style directly influences emotional development, behavioural regulation, and social adaptation, making it a critical component of holistic care [16–18,24].

From contemporary psychological perspectives, authoritative parenting aligns with attachment theory, social learning theory, and developmental systems theory, emphasizing responsiveness, consistency, and emotional attunement [18,24,25]. These principles parallel Ayurvedic concepts of *Achara*, *Sadvritta*, and *Achara Rasayana*, which emphasize ethical conduct, emotional balance, and nurturing environments for mental well-being [5–8,15].

Viewing parenting style through *Upashaya–Anupashaya* offers an interdisciplinary framework that integrates behavioural science with Ayurvedic diagnostics. Parenting education and intervention programs should therefore be incorporated into neurological management plans to reduce caregiver stress and enhance child outcomes [12,21,26,30].

## CONCLUSION

Parenting style plays a vital role in shaping the behavioural and emotional development of children with neurological deficits. When interpreted through the Ayurvedic concept of *Upashaya–Anupashaya*, positive parenting—particularly authoritative parenting—emerges as an effective supportive therapeutic measure. Integrating parenting guidance with conventional and Ayurvedic management strategies can significantly enhance holistic outcomes in neurologically challenged children [5,12,14,25].

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