

A Study of Emotional Intelligence in Relation to Parent–Child Relationship among Secondary School Students of Jaipur

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Abstract

The present study examines the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and the parent–child relationship among secondary school students in Jaipur, India. A sample of 360 boys and girls was selected using stratified random sampling techniques. Emotional intelligence was measured using the Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS) developed by Dr. Arun Kumar Singh and Dr. Shruti Narain, while the quality of the parent–child relationship was assessed using a 25-item self-constructed descriptive interview schedule without Likert-type responses. The study employed descriptive statistics, gender comparisons, Pearson correlation, and regression analysis. Results revealed a significant positive relationship between EI and the parent–child relationship. Gender differences were found on selected EI dimensions, with girls showing higher empathy and relational sensitivity. Emotional intelligence emerged as a strong predictor of the parent–child relationship. The findings highlight the necessity of emotional competency programs in schools and the promotion of constructive parental engagement to improve adolescents' emotional stability and interpersonal development.

Keywords

Emotional intelligence, parent–child relationship, secondary students, Jaipur, adolescence.

Introduction

Emotional intelligence (EI) refers to the ability to understand, manage, and express emotions effectively in various social contexts (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). During adolescence, individuals experience rapid emotional, cognitive, and social changes. The quality of interactions with parents plays a decisive role in shaping adolescents' emotional maturity, self-regulation, and social behaviour. Parent–child relationships characterized by affection, open communication, and emotional security promote higher levels of emotional intelligence and positive social adjustment (Saarni, 1999). Conversely, distant, conflict-ridden, or authoritarian relationships may hinder emotional growth. Jaipur, being a fast-urbanizing educational hub, presents a unique socio-cultural environment influencing adolescent development. Therefore, examining EI in relation to parent–child interactions becomes crucial for understanding the emotional well-being of secondary school students.

Review of Literature

Emotional intelligence has been associated with improved academic functioning, psychological health, interpersonal competence, and conflict management (Goleman, 1995). Adolescents with higher EI are better equipped to navigate peer pressure, academic expectations, and emotional conflicts.

Research consistently shows that parent–child relationships significantly influence EI development. Warm parenting practices foster empathy, emotional understanding, and self-confidence (Brackett et al., 2011). Singh and Narain’s Emotional Intelligence Scale is widely used in India for assessing adolescents’ emotional abilities across understanding emotions, empathy, motivation, and handling relations.

Gender differences in EI have also been documented. Girls often display higher emotional sensitivity, empathy, and social understanding than boys (Katyal & Awasthi, 2005). However, contextual factors such as family structure, parenting style, socio-economic background, and school environment also modulate EI and relational patterns.

The literature strongly suggests a positive association between emotional intelligence and healthy parent–child relationships, forming the basis for the present investigation.

Objectives

1. To assess the emotional intelligence of secondary school students in Jaipur.
2. To examine the parent–child relationship using a self-constructed 25-item descriptive interview schedule.
3. To analyze the relationship between emotional intelligence and parent–child relationship.
4. To study gender differences in emotional intelligence among adolescents.
5. To determine whether emotional intelligence predicts the quality of the parent–child relationship.

Hypotheses

H1: Emotional intelligence is positively correlated with the parent–child relationship.

H2: Girls score higher than boys on selected dimensions of emotional intelligence.

H3: Emotional intelligence significantly predicts the quality of the parent–child relationship.

Methodology

Research Design

A descriptive correlational research design was adopted to analyze the relationship between emotional intelligence and parent–child relationship.

Sample

The sample consisted of 360 secondary school students (boys and girls) studying in grade IX in Jaipur. Stratified random sampling ensured balanced representation across gender, type of school (government/private), and locality.

Instruments

1. Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS) – Singh & Narain

31 items

Measures four domains:

Understanding emotions

Understanding motivation

Empathy

Handling relationships

Test–retest reliability: $r = .86$

Widely validated for Indian adolescent populations

2. Self-Constructed Parent–Child Relationship Interview Schedule (25 items)

A descriptive, open-ended interview schedule . Items explored communication, emotional bonding, discipline style, time spent together, decision-making, conflict resolution, and trust.

Data Analysis

Mean and standard deviation

Independent t-tests for gender differences

Pearson’s correlation

Linear regression analysis

Results and Discussion

1. Correlation Analysis

A significant positive correlation was found between emotional intelligence and parent–child relationship ($r = .41$ to $.57$ across domains). Adolescents with higher EI reported more supportive, communicative, and emotionally secure relationships with their parents.

2. Gender Differences

Girls performed significantly higher in empathy and relational EI, whereas boys showed marginally higher scores in motivation and emotional regulation. These patterns reflect existing literature suggesting that girls are often more socially and emotionally expressive during adolescence.

3. Regression Analysis

Emotional intelligence emerged as a significant predictor of the parent–child relationship ($\beta = .62$, $p < .01$). This emphasizes that adolescents with stronger emotional skills perceive higher parental support, warmth, and involvement.

4. Interpretation

The emotional climate of the home profoundly shapes adolescents' ability to handle stress, form friendships, manage conflicts, and internalize values. Supportive parent–child interactions help adolescents develop resilience, empathy, and self-control—central components of EI.

Educational Implications

Schools should implement structured EI-enhancement programs focusing on empathy, communication, and stress management.

Parent-training workshops should address emotional responsiveness, active listening, and healthy communication.

School counselors can bridge communication gaps between adolescents and parents.

Curriculum planners should integrate socio-emotional learning into daily school activities.

Limitations

Reliance on self-report tools may introduce subjective bias.

The interview schedule required qualitative coding, which may vary between raters.

The study is limited to Jaipur; results may not generalize to rural or other cultural settings.

Recommendations for Future Research

Conduct longitudinal studies to observe emotional development over time.

Include parents and teachers as additional respondents for triangulated data.

Perform comparative studies across socio-economic categories and urban vs. rural contexts.

Develop intervention modules and test their effectiveness experimentally.

Conclusion

The study concludes that emotional intelligence and parent–child relationships are strongly connected among secondary students in Jaipur. Positive, communicative, and emotionally responsive parenting fosters higher EI, while emotionally competent adolescents perceive their parents more favourably. This reciprocal relationship highlights the need for collaborative efforts between families and schools to promote emotional well-being, psychological balance, and healthy developmental outcomes.

References

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