



## Social and emotional maturity in relation to parenting styles among college students

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### Abstract

The present study examines social and emotional maturity in relation to parenting styles among college students. For this purpose, 180 individuals age range from 18 to 21 were interviewed from Jaipur district of Rajasthan using the Parenting Scale, Social Maturity Scale and Emotional Maturity Scale. Results shows that there is no significant relationship between social maturity and parenting styles. But a significant relationship was found between emotional maturity and parenting style. Furthermore, significant difference was found between mothering and fathering in all kind of parenting styles for boys but not for girls.

**Keywords:** Emotional maturity, social maturity, parenting style

### Introduction

The strongest factor in moulding a child's personality is his/her relationship with parents (Mohanraj, 2015) [10]. It is interesting to investigate how parents foster socio-emotional maturity among their children i.e. how they interact with children, how they rear their children and how parenting develops social-emotional maturity among children. It is also equally interesting to examine how individuals develop socio-emotional maturity i.e. how they understand and deal with people and emotions and how identity develops. Erikson has identified developmental stages throughout the life span. Stage theory of psychological development provides an integrated framework for exploring the impact of family dynamics on the psycho-social success of emerging adults. Over time, investigators have grouped parenting behaviours into related clusters calling them as parenting styles. These parenting styles provide the infrastructure for investigating the effects of parenting behaviours on the development of socio-emotional maturity of emerging adults. Thus, there lies a very significant relationship among these variables: child-development, socio-emotional maturity and parenting.

The relationship between the combined effects of knowledge of child-development on the one hand and the level of socio-emotional maturity on the other hand and the extent to which this relationship affects children's attitudes toward parenting are matters of great significance and research. Hence, the joint relationship between socio-emotional maturity and parenting needs further investigations to make intelligent decisions that are important and helpful for cognitive development of children and adolescents and fruitful training of adults to make them socially-emotionally mature. In the present era, the task of raising the children in a fruitful manner is really very challenging because of fast changing system and its negative impacts on the young generation.

Mobile, T.V. and internet are within easy reach of almost every child these days. Market and media both are universally affecting children and adults alike. The easy access to these things is mind-boggling. It is being noticed that mostly parents are busy with their earning jobs and other activities. They have no quality time to look after and

pay proper attention to their wards. Parent-children and teacher-taught interactions and relationships are minimizing day-by-day resulting in unwanted and avoidable misunderstanding and restlessness in their lives.

Moreover, loneliness and social isolation, generally underscored or overlooked in the Facebook and Smartphone era, are major factors responsible for depression. Though social networking does not cause isolation or depression, it certainly helps mask it. Social media, social networking and instant connectivity cannot replace empathy and attachment behaviour. Mental depression is increasing rapidly in India. As per report of World Federation for Mental Health, 5 to 10% children and 10 to 15% adults are suffering from mental depression and among them adolescents and ladies are the easy victims. Teens turn belligerent and explosive to hide the isolation within, which adults misunderstand and put down as plain stropiness. Depression in young people often coexists with other mental disorders such as anxiety and disruptive behaviour or illness (Report by American Journal of psychiatry). Experts foretell that if the condition does not improve, the disease of mental depression would become most fatal by 2030.

Besides this, India is one among the highest in the world with about 1.87 lakh people killing themselves in 2010. Most people who hurt themselves are likely to do it before the age of 30. The Registrar General of India data shows 3% of causes of death surveyed (2,684 of 95,335) in people 15 years or older were suicide, of which 40% of all suicides in men and 56% in women occurred at ages 15-29 years. 'Young educated Indians from the richer states are killing themselves in numbers that are almost the highest in the world'. Among those, who commit suicide, about 80% are adolescents and young adults. Such incidents, which are the result of socio-emotional immaturity and lack of proper understanding and knowledge of child-development and parenting attitude training as well, are on a high graph.

Mental depression and suicide are the result of ever increasing study and socio-economic stress associated with non-fulfillment of high expectations of performance in every walk of life. 'Disappointments increase when aspirations related to success and happiness are distorted or not fulfilled by the reality faced by young people in a fast-

changing society, where jobs may be better paying but less secure and where social networking is more accessible but loneliness more common'. In the fast-changing times, the youth face an emotional and psychological disconnect between the deeply felt need for a more meaningful fulfillment and the materialistic demands of the system to succeed at all costs. This causes much anxiety, depression and loss of a larger purpose in life among the younger generation.

Furthermore, college-going students are taking more interest in activities like strikes, politics and rowdies. Other than studies, sometimes they indulge in anti-social and criminal activities and even commit suicide. They are being addicted to restricted drugs. Marital conflicts and divorce between mothers and fathers are now becoming more frequent. Adolescents and young adults are more easily vulnerable to such situations. Emotions are intensified in adolescents by a complex interplay between genetic, biological, psychiatric and psychological factors, which take a trigger to push a child over the edge. Every emotion and experience teens undergo is heightened as they struggle to adjust to the hormonal and physical changes in their bodies. Girls are twice as likely as boys to fall into a downward mood spiral as they undergo far more hormonal changes during their teens.

A combination of several factors prompts adolescents and young adults to make them more vulnerable to emotional meltdown and hurt themselves. They are (a) 'Socio-demographic' and 'Educational Factors', comprising (1) Gender, (2) Low Socio-economic Status, (3) Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender sexual orientation, and (4) Poor Academic Performance; (b) 'Personal Trauma' comprising (1) Parent's separation or divorce, (2) Death of Parent or Sibling, (3) Physical or sexual Abuse, and (4) Social Rejection; and (c) 'Psychiatric' and 'Psychological Factors' comprising (1) Psychiatric Problems, especially depression, anxiety, attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder, (2) Drug or Alcohol Misuse, (3) Impulsivity, (4) Low Self-esteem, (5) Poor Social Problem-solving, (6) Perfectionism, and (7) Hopelessness.

Moreover, science has always focused only on the rational aspect of human behavior and performance, while higher education so far has concentrated merely on academic knowledge and achievement. Both have ignored the emotional side of human nature while it is often the emotions of a person that immensely influence his/her thoughts, actions and results. As a result, students coming out of institutions of higher education today may be more knowledgeable, intelligent and expert but for want of desired social and emotional development, they are significantly lacking in the sophisticated and fruitful dealing with their peers, fellow-workers and subordinates. This often results in unsuccessful and frustrating career. Hence, it is being emphatically realized today that it is not sufficient only to produce the best brain i.e. the best and brightest scholars and technocrats, rather it is also equally or even more important to prepare them as a 'whole student' i.e. to equip the students with social and emotional competency – a major factor responsible for future success besides their intellectual and academic excellence.

The above facts indicate the grave situation in India and there is an urgent need of development that is related to all-round social development and psychological fulfillment. 'The present educational, social and family set-up is unable

to provide the wisdom and skills to navigate a complex fast-changing life with new aspirations and old social restrictions'. This obviously necessitates the more extensive research in the field of socio-emotional development to find out ways and means to strike a proper balance with aspirations and available realistic options. There is an equally urgent need to educate the young ones about the basics of mental well-being like emotional intelligence and how to manage strong emotions like anger, hate, anxiety and the strong urge to end one's life avoiding isolation, loneliness and learning de-stressing methods and how lessen the gap between high aspirations and the limitations of reality.

Social immaturity in adults means lacking social skills. It is both a societal problem and also a personal problem for affected individual. It results in personality disorders such as depression, low self-esteem and low level of confidence. Socio-emotional maturity makes an individual happy, peaceful and successful. Since parenting has a very significant role in the development of socio-emotional maturity among children, the success and peace in life are very much concerned with the parenting styles and parent attitude training. The present study has been undertaken to find out queries in the development psychology regarding parenting behaviours or styles and to know how good emotional and social understanding or maturity can lead to increased socio-emotional effectiveness and a peaceful and successful life of college-going undergraduate students.

## Methodology

### Objectives

1. To study the relationship between social maturity and parenting styles.
2. To study the relationship between emotional maturity and parenting styles.
3. To study the differences between mothering and fathering in all kinds of parenting styles for boys and girls separately.

### Hypotheses

1. There will be significant relationship between social maturity and parenting styles.
2. There will be significant relationship between emotional maturity and parenting styles.
3. There will be significant differences between mothering and fathering in all kinds of parenting styles for boys and girls separately.

### Research design

The correlational research design was adopted for the present research work.

### Sample

The sample comprised 180 subjects in total. There were 90 male subjects and 90 female subjects taken in the sample. All subjects belong to the age group in between 18 to 21 years. All are under graduate students from Jaipur district of Rajasthan.

### Tools Used

1. Parenting Scale by Dr. R.L. Bhardwaj.
2. Social Maturity Scale by Dr. R.P. Srivastava.
3. Emotional Maturity Scale by Dr. Yashvir Singh and Mahesh Bhargava.

**Statistical analysis**

The Mean, Standard Deviation and Correlation was computed to see the relationship between variables. t test was also implied to check the mean difference.

**Result and discussion**

**Hypothesis 1**

**Table 1:** Showing co-efficient of correlation between parenting styles (P.S.) and scores of whole sample on social maturity (S.Q.)

Variable	Mean	N	SD	R	Level of Significance
S.Q	96.48	180	49.74	.054	NS
P. S. (total)	287.44	180	28.92		
S Q	96.48	180	49.74	.029	NS
PS.A	40.09	180	5.02		
S.Q.	96.48	180	49.74	.016	NS
PS.B	38.81	180	4.66		
S.Q.	96.48	180	49.74	.124	NS
PS.C	38.53	180	5.32		
S.Q.	96.48	180	49.74	.067	NS
PS.D	34.32	180	5.69		
S.Q.	96.48	180	49.74	-.026	NS
PS.E	38.78	180	5.51		
S.Q.	96.48	180	49.74	.018	NS
PS.F	38.54	180	5.94		
S.Q.	96.48	180	49.74	.070	NS
PS.G	38.83	180	5.44		
S.Q.	96.48	180	49.74	-.018	NS
PS.H	19.53	180	3.07		

It is clear from the above table 1 that the co-efficient of correlation between total scores of social maturity and total scores of parenting styles as a whole is not found significant (r = .054). Similarly, the correlation calculated separately between each parenting style and social maturity is also found non-significant. Thus, it is obvious from the results that there exists no significant relationship between any of the parenting style and social maturity. However, it is important to point out that the subjects are found in the category of average so far as their social maturity is concerned. Hence, the hypothesis that there will be significant relationship between social maturity and parenting styles is not accepted. Likewise, all its sub-scales are also not accepted due to insignificant r values.

**Hypothesis 2**

**Table 2:** Showing co-efficient of correlation between parenting styles (PS) and scores of whole sample on emotional maturity (EQ)

Variable	Mean	N	SD	R	Level of Significance
E.Q.	122.32	180	34.26	-.336	.01
PS (total)	287.44	180	28.92		
E.Q.	122.32	180	34.26	-.253	.01
PS.A	40.09	180	5.02		
E.Q.	122.32	180	34.26	-.215	.01
PS.B	38.81	180	4.66		
E.Q.	122.32	180	34.26	-.291	.01
PS.C	38.53	180	5.32		
E.Q.	122.32	180	34.26	-.281	.01
PS.D	34.32	180	5.69		
E.Q.	122.32	180	34.26	-.214	.01
PS.E	38.78	180	5.51		
E.Q.	122.32	180	34.26	-.247	.01
PS.F	38.54	180	5.94		
E.Q.	122.32	180	34.26	-.204	.01
PS.G	38.83	180	5.44		
E.Q.	122.32	180	34.26	-.177	.05
PS.H	19.53	180	3.07		

It is clear from the above table 2 that there is significant relationship between emotional maturity and parenting styles. Here it is very important to point out that emotional maturity and parenting styles are negatively correlated (r = -.336 < .01). Further, the correlation between each parenting style and emotional maturity was calculated separately and significantly negative correlation is found between 'Rejection parenting style' (A) and emotional maturity at .01 level of confidence (r = -.253 < .01), 'Carelessness parenting style' (B) and emotional maturity (r = -.215 < .01), 'Neglect parenting style' (C) and emotional maturity (r = -.291 < .01), 'Utopian parenting style' (D) and emotional maturity (r = -.281 < .01), 'Lenient parenting style' (E) and emotional maturity (r = -.214 < .01), 'Freedom parenting style' (F) and emotional maturity (r = -.247 < .01), 'Faulty role expectation parenting style' (G) and emotional maturity (r = -.204 < .01), and 'Marital conflict parenting style' (H) and emotional maturity (r = -.177 < .05).

Thus, it is obvious that all the subjects are found extremely emotionally immature as overall mean score of emotional maturity is 122.32, which comes in the category in between 107-240 scores of extremely emotionally immature category. Therefore, the second hypothesis is accepted.

**Hypothesis 3**

**Table 3:** Showing difference between Mothering and Fathering for boys

Variables	Mean	N	SD	SED	t	df	Level of Significance
PS.Boys.Mother.A	20.73	90	2.77	.49	3.30	89	.01
PS.Boys.Father.A	19.11	90	4.12				
PS.Boys.Mother.B	19.93	90	2.51	.43	3.16	89	.01
PS.Boys.Father.B	18.57	90	3.62				
PS.Boys.Mother.C	19.83	90	2.56	.47	2.24	89	.05
PS.Boys.Father.C	18.79	90	4.21				
PS.Boys.Mother.D	17.23	90	3.71	.47	.71	89	NS
PS.Boys.Father.D	16.90	90	3.38				
PS.Boys.Mother.E	19.34	90	3.13	.41	1.65	89	NS
PS.Boys.Father.E	18.67	90	3.82				
PS.Boys.Mother.F	19.02	90	3.27	.49	.50	89	NS
PS.Boys.Father.F	18.78	90	4.09				
PS.Boys.Mother.G	19.33	90	3.00	.43	1.06	89	NS
PS.Boys.Father.G	18.88	90	4.03				

In case of boys, the above table 3 shows significant difference between fathers' and mothers' parenting styles with regard to 'rejection vs. acceptance' (A), 'carelessness vs. protection' (B) and 'neglect vs. indulgence' (C) parenting models having t values 3.30 < .01, 3.16 < .01, and 2.24 < .05 respectively. In rest parenting styles no significant difference is found between mothers' and fathers' parenting modes. Hence, the third hypothesis that there will be significant differences between mothering and fathering in all kinds of the parenting style among boys is partially accepted.

**Table 4:** Showing difference between Mothering and Fathering for Girls

Variables	Mean	N	SD	SED	t	df	Level of Significance
PS.Girls.Mother.A	20.54	90	2.58	.40	1.90	89	NS
PS.Girls.Father.A	19.79	90	3.47				
PS.Girls.Mother.B	20.06	90	2.57	.43	2.28	89	.05
PS.Girls.Father.B	19.07	90	3.56				

PS. Girls.Mother.C	19.47	90	2.63	.42	1.16	89	NS
PS. Girls.Father.C	18.98	90	3.89				
PS. Girls.Mother.D	17.29	90	3.47	.39	.17	89	NS
PS. Girls.Father.D	17.22	90	3.48				
PS. Girls.Mother.E	19.49	90	2.97	.42	1.36	89	NS
PS. Girls.Father.E	20.06	90	3.48				
PS. Girls.Mother.F	19.43	90	3.10	.38	1.10	89	NS
PS. Girls.Father.F	19.86	90	3.91				
PS. Girls.Mother.G	19.59	90	2.72	.36	.75	89	NS
PS. Girls.Father.G	19.86	90	3.27				

In case of girls, the above table 4 shows no significant difference between mothers’ and fathers’ parenting styles in any of the parenting modes except the ‘carelessness vs. protection’ (B) parenting style, in which significant difference at .05 level of significance ( $t_{2.28} < .05$ ) is found. However, mothers are found more protective than fathers. Therefore, the third hypothesis that there will be significant difference between mothers’ and fathers’ parenting modes among girls is rejected.

**Conclusion**

Social-emotional immaturity and lack of proper understanding and knowledge of child development and parenting attitudes are continuously increasing the graph of negative activities like strikes, rapes, suicides and other criminal and anti-social activities among the students and thereby killing the larger purpose of human life. There is a paucity of research on social-emotional maturity in relation to parenting styles particularly with regard to college students in India, while both social and emotional maturities are vital for attaining success and happiness in life. This obviously necessitates the urgency of social-emotional learning and more extensive research in this field to find the ways and means as how to manage strong emotions like anger, hate and anxiety; how to avoid stress, isolation and depression; how to strike a proper balance between aspirations and available realistic options i.e. how to lessen the gap between high aspirations and the limitations of reality; and how the knowledge of different parenting styles and their effects can help parents in raising their children in a much better way.

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