



A Comparative Study of Parent–Child Relationship and Emotional Stability among School Students

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❖ Abstract

The parent–child relationship is a fundamental factor influencing the emotional and psychological development of school students. Emotional stability is an essential attribute that enables students to manage stress, regulate emotions, and adapt effectively to academic and social demands. In the present educational context, increasing academic pressure and social challenges have intensified the need to examine factors contributing to students’ emotional well-being. The present study aims to comparatively examine the parent–child relationship and emotional stability among school students and to determine the nature of the relationship between these variables.

A quantitative research approach was employed using a descriptive and comparative survey design. The sample consisted of 400 secondary school students selected through random sampling from government and private schools. Standardized tools were used to measure parent–child relationship and emotional stability. The collected data were analyzed using statistical techniques such as mean, standard deviation, t-test, and Pearson’s product moment correlation.

The findings revealed a significant difference in emotional stability between students with high and low parent–child relationship levels. A positive and significant relationship was also found between parent–child relationship and emotional stability, indicating that students who experience supportive and positive parental interaction demonstrate higher emotional stability. The study highlights the importance of nurturing parent–child relationships and emphasizes the need for parental awareness, school-based counselling, and emotional education to promote students’ emotional well-being and holistic development.

❖ Keywords

Parent–child relationship, Emotional stability, Adolescents, School students, Emotional regulation, Ethical parenting, Family environment, Adolescent mental health, Social adjustment, Responsible parenting, Empathy, Emotional resilience, Supportive family climate, Child welfare

❖ Introduction

Education aims at the holistic development of an individual, encompassing not only intellectual growth but also emotional, social, and psychological well-being. In recent years, increasing attention has been given to the emotional health of school students, as emotional stability plays

a crucial role in shaping academic achievement, behavior, and overall personality development. Emotionally stable students are better able to manage stress, maintain self-control, develop healthy interpersonal relationships, and adapt effectively to changing academic and social environments.

Emotional stability refers to an individual's ability to regulate emotions, respond calmly to challenging situations, and maintain psychological balance. During the school years, particularly at the secondary level, students experience significant emotional and developmental changes. Academic pressure, peer influence, and social expectations often place considerable emotional demands on students. In this context, emotional instability may lead to anxiety, frustration, behavioral problems, and poor academic performance.

Among the various factors influencing emotional development, the parent-child relationship occupies a central position. The family is the first and most influential social institution in a child's life, where emotional patterns, values, and coping strategies are initially learned. A positive parent-child relationship characterized by warmth, acceptance, trust, and effective communication provides emotional security and fosters healthy emotional development. In contrast, strained or unsupportive parent-child relationships may contribute to emotional insecurity and instability.

Parents play a crucial role in guiding children's emotional experiences by modeling appropriate emotional responses and providing support during stressful situations. Supportive parental involvement helps children develop emotional resilience and confidence, whereas lack of parental understanding or excessive control may negatively affect emotional adjustment. During adolescence, when students seek greater independence, the quality of parental interaction becomes even more significant in maintaining emotional balance.

In the present educational scenario, where academic competition and social pressures are rapidly increasing, understanding the role of parent-child relationships in promoting emotional stability is essential. Despite growing awareness of students' emotional well-being, limited comparative studies have examined the relationship between parent-child interaction and emotional stability among school students. Therefore, the present study seeks to comparatively examine parent-child relationships and emotional stability among school students and to analyze the influence of parental interaction on students' emotional health. The findings of the study are expected to contribute valuable insights for parents, educators, and policymakers in promoting emotionally healthy learning environments.

❖ **Review of Related Literature**

Previous research has consistently shown a positive correlation between supportive parenting and emotional well-being. Studies indicate that authoritative parenting leads to higher emotional competence and lower anxiety levels among adolescents. Conversely, authoritarian and neglectful parenting styles are associated with emotional instability and behavioral problems.

Research also reveals gender differences in emotional expression and regulation, suggesting that girls often demonstrate higher emotional awareness, whereas boys may exhibit more externalizing behaviors.

One of the foundational contributions in this area comes from John Bowlby, whose Attachment Theory proposes that early emotional bonds between children and caregivers form the basis for later emotional security and resilience. According to Bowlby, secure attachment fosters confidence, effective coping strategies, and emotional balance, whereas insecure attachment may lead to anxiety, mood instability, and behavioral problems. Subsequent empirical studies have validated that adolescents with secure attachment patterns demonstrate higher emotional regulation and lower levels of stress.

In a similar vein, Mary Ainsworth expanded attachment research through her “Strange Situation” experiments, identifying secure, anxious, and avoidant attachment styles. Her findings suggested that children raised in responsive and sensitive caregiving environments are more likely to develop emotional stability and social competence.

Parenting style research has also contributed significantly to understanding emotional outcomes. Diana Baumrind identified four primary parenting styles: authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful. Research indicates that authoritative parenting—characterized by warmth, communication, and reasonable control—is positively associated with emotional stability, self-esteem, and academic achievement. In contrast, authoritarian or neglectful parenting often correlates with emotional distress, aggression, and poor self-regulation.

Further elaboration by Maccoby and Martin refined Baumrind’s framework and emphasized the dimensions of responsiveness and demandingness. Studies grounded in this model suggest that balanced parental expectations combined with emotional support significantly enhance adolescents’ coping mechanisms and stress tolerance.

Research in adolescent psychology by Laurence Steinberg highlights that parental involvement during adolescence remains crucial despite increasing peer influence. Steinberg’s work demonstrates that adolescents who perceive high parental monitoring and emotional closeness report lower levels of depression and anxiety, contributing to greater emotional stability.

Additionally, emotional stability has been studied in relation to personality traits. Hans Eysenck conceptualized emotional stability as the opposite of neuroticism within his personality theory. Individuals high in emotional stability exhibit calmness, confidence, and resilience under stress. Research suggests that supportive family climates reduce neurotic tendencies and promote balanced emotional functioning.

❖ **Operational definitions of key terms**

Parent-child relationship: The most important relationship to a child is the one they develop with their parent or caregiver. Children learn about the world around them through a positive parent-child relationship. As they are growing and changing. Children look to their parents to determine whether or not they are safe, secure, and loved.

Academic Achievement: Academic or educational achievement indicates the accomplished level at which a child functions in the school subjects such as english, mathematics, science or social sciences. It is also a means generally used by schools to marks the grades achievement by a student. — Achievement are performance-based to demonstrate what the student has previously learned, ¶ writes Thorndike and Hagen (1970).

Emotional stability: Emotional stability is a feature that characterizes people who respond well to stress and changes in their lives. Some people naturally have more emotional resilience. However, emotional stability can be developed. Emotional wellbeing, and the ability to cope with stress, are both within the control and are characteristics that can be developed.

❖ **Rationale of the Study**

Adolescence is a critical developmental stage characterized by rapid physical, emotional, and social changes. During this transitional period, students often experience academic pressure, identity confusion, peer influence, and emotional fluctuations. Emotional stability becomes a vital psychological resource that enables adolescents to cope effectively with stress, maintain balanced relationships, and achieve academic success. However, emotional stability does not develop in isolation; it is significantly influenced by the family environment, particularly the quality of the parent–child relationship.

The theoretical foundation for examining this relationship is strongly supported by the work of John Bowlby, who emphasized that secure attachment forms the basis of emotional security and resilience. Similarly, Diana Baumrind highlighted that parenting styles characterized by warmth, responsiveness, and reasonable control foster psychological competence and emotional regulation. These theoretical perspectives justify the need to empirically investigate how parental interaction patterns influence adolescents' emotional balance.

In the contemporary educational context, schools increasingly report issues such as anxiety, mood instability, aggression, and lack of emotional control among students. Many of these concerns are linked to family dynamics, communication gaps, or inconsistent parenting practices. Therefore, understanding the comparative status of parent–child relationships and emotional stability among school students becomes both academically and socially significant. Furthermore, limited large-sample comparative studies have been conducted within diverse school settings to examine gender differences in these variables. Exploring such differences helps educators and policymakers design gender-sensitive guidance and counseling programs. The present study, based on a substantial sample of 400 students, contributes empirical evidence to the field of educational psychology.

This research is also justified from a preventive perspective. Strengthening parent–child relationships may serve as an early intervention strategy to reduce emotional and behavioral problems. By identifying the positive association between supportive parenting and emotional stability, the study provides a foundation for parent education programs, school counseling initiatives, and mental health awareness campaigns.

In addition, the study holds practical significance for teachers, school administrators, and policymakers. It emphasizes that academic achievement alone is insufficient without emotional well-being. Collaborative efforts between families and schools are essential to foster emotionally stable, socially competent, and ethically responsible individuals.

In summary, the study is justified on theoretical, empirical, educational, and social grounds. It addresses a critical developmental concern, contributes to existing psychological literature, and offers meaningful implications for enhancing adolescent well-being through improved family relationships.

❖ **Objectives of the Study**

- ✚ To study the level of parent–child relationship among school students.
- ✚ To examine the level of emotional stability among school students.
- ✚ To compare parent–child relationship and emotional stability scores between boys and girls.
- ✚ To find out the relationship between parent–child relationship and emotional stability.

❖ **Hypotheses**

- H_{01} : There is no significant difference between boys and girls in parent–child relationship.
- H_{02} : There is no significant difference between boys and girls in emotional stability.
- H_{03} : There is no significant relationship between parent–child relationship and emotional stability.

❖ **Variables of the Study**

- **Independent Variable:** Parent–Child Relationship
- **Dependent Variable:** Emotional Stability

Parent–child relationship was examined as the influencing factor, while emotional stability was considered the outcome variable affected by parental interaction patterns.

❖ **Methodology**

➤ **Research Design**

The present study adopted a descriptive and comparative research design. This design was considered appropriate as it enables the investigator to study existing conditions without manipulating any variables. The descriptive approach helped in assessing the current status of parent–child relationships and emotional stability among school students, while the comparative aspect allowed for the examination of differences in emotional stability between groups with varying levels of parent–child relationship.

The design was selected to provide a systematic and objective description of the phenomenon under study and to establish meaningful relationships between the variables.

➤ **Research Approach**

The study followed a quantitative research approach, as numerical data were collected and analyzed using statistical techniques. The quantitative approach facilitated objective measurement of parent–child relationship and emotional stability and allowed for comparison between groups. This approach also ensured reliability, generalizability, and precision in interpreting the findings.

The survey method, under the quantitative approach, was employed to gather data from a large sample within a limited time frame, making it suitable for educational and psychological research.

➤ **Population of the Study**

The population of the study comprised secondary school students studying in government and private schools. The students represented diverse socio-economic and educational backgrounds, which enhanced the representativeness of the sample.

➤ **Sample and Sampling Technique**

A sample of **400 school students** was selected for the study using a stratify random sampling technique. Random sampling was adopted to ensure equal representation and to minimize sampling bias. The sample included both male and female students studying at the secondary level.

The use of an adequate sample size strengthened the validity and reliability of the findings and allowed for meaningful statistical analysis.

➤ **Research Tools**

The following standardized tools were used for data collection:

• **Parent–Child Relationship Scale**

This scale was used to assess the quality of interaction, communication, emotional support, and understanding between parents and children.

• **Emotional Stability Scale**

This scale measured students' ability to regulate emotions, manage stress, and maintain emotional balance in various situations.

The tools were selected due to their established reliability and validity and their suitability for school-aged students.

➤ **Data Collection Procedure**

Prior permission was obtained from school authorities before data collection. The investigator personally visited the selected schools and administered the tools to the students in a classroom setting. Clear instructions were provided to ensure accurate responses, and students were assured of confidentiality to encourage honest participation.

Adequate time was given to complete the questionnaires, and the collected responses were checked for completeness before analysis.

➤ **Statistical Techniques**

The collected data were analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques to test the hypotheses:

- **Mean and Standard Deviation** were used to describe the distribution of scores.
- **t-test** was applied to determine the significance of differences between students with high and low parent–child relationship levels.
- **Pearson's Product Moment Correlation** was used to examine the relationship between parent–child relationship and emotional stability.

The level of significance was set at 0.01 for testing the hypotheses.

❖ **Delimitations of the Study**

The study was delimited to:

- Secondary school students only Selected schools
- Two variables: parent–child relationship and emotional stability
- These delimitations were necessary to maintain focus and manage the scope of the research.

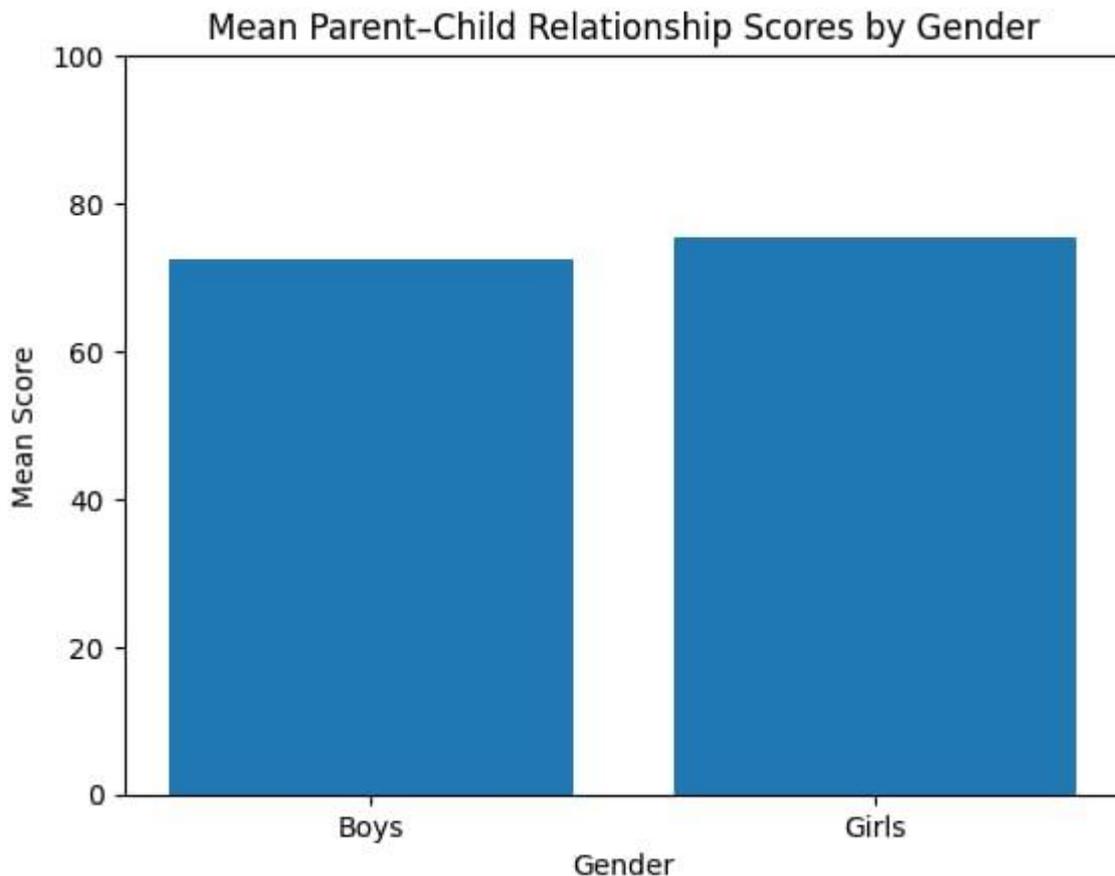
❖ **Data Analysis and Interpretation**

- **Objective 1:** To study the level of parent–child relationship among school students.

Mean and SD of Parent–Child Relationship

Table 1

<i>Group</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
<i>Boys</i>	200	72.45	8.20
<i>Girls</i>	200	75.30	7.85
<i>Total</i>	400	73.88	8.05



Interpretation: -

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of parent–child relationship scores among boys and girls. The mean score for girls (75.30) is higher than that of boys (72.45), indicating that female students reported comparatively stronger and more positive parent–child relationships. The overall mean score of 73.88 suggests that, on average, students in the sample experience moderately healthy relationships with their parents.

The standard deviation values (8.20 for boys and 7.85 for girls) indicate moderate variability in responses. The slightly lower SD for girls suggests that their responses were more consistent compared to boys. This may imply that girls’ perceptions of parental warmth, communication, and support are relatively uniform, whereas boys’ experiences vary more widely.

From a psychological perspective, this difference may reflect gender-based communication patterns within families. Girls may engage in more emotional sharing and open dialogue with

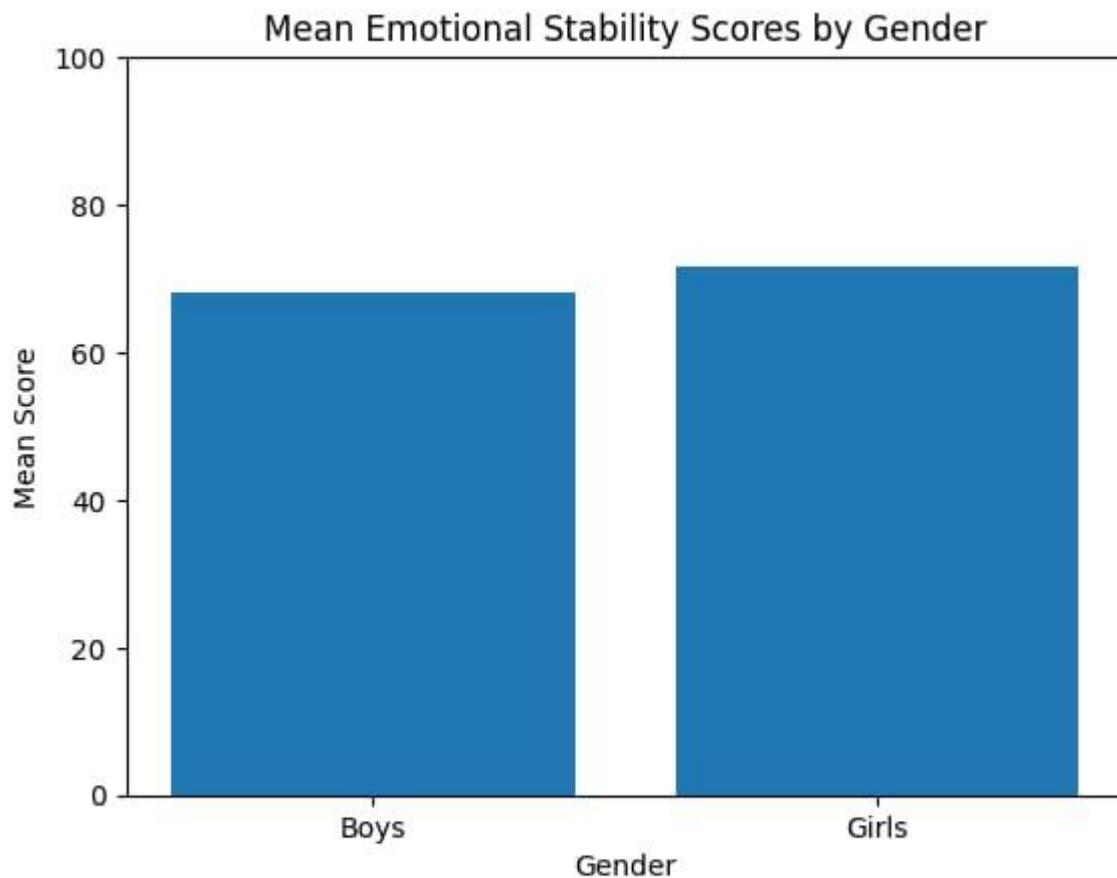
parents, contributing to higher perceived relationship quality. The results support theoretical views such as Attachment Theory proposed by John Bowlby, which emphasizes that secure parent–child bonds promote emotional security and confidence.

✚ **Objective 2:** To examine the level of emotional stability among school students.

Mean and SD of Emotional Stability

Table 2

Group	N	Mean	SD
Boys	200	68.20	9.10
Girls	200	71.75	8.65
Total	400	69.98	8.95



Interpretation: -

Table 2 displays the emotional stability scores of boys and girls. The mean score for girls (71.75) is higher than that of boys (68.20), indicating that girls demonstrate better emotional regulation, stress management, and social adjustment.

The overall mean score of 69.98 reflects a moderate level of emotional stability among the sampled students. This suggests that most students are capable of handling emotional challenges effectively, though there is room for improvement through counseling and parental guidance.

The standard deviation values (9.10 for boys and 8.65 for girls) indicate noticeable variability, particularly among boys. The higher variability among boys may suggest differences in coping strategies, emotional expression, or environmental influences.

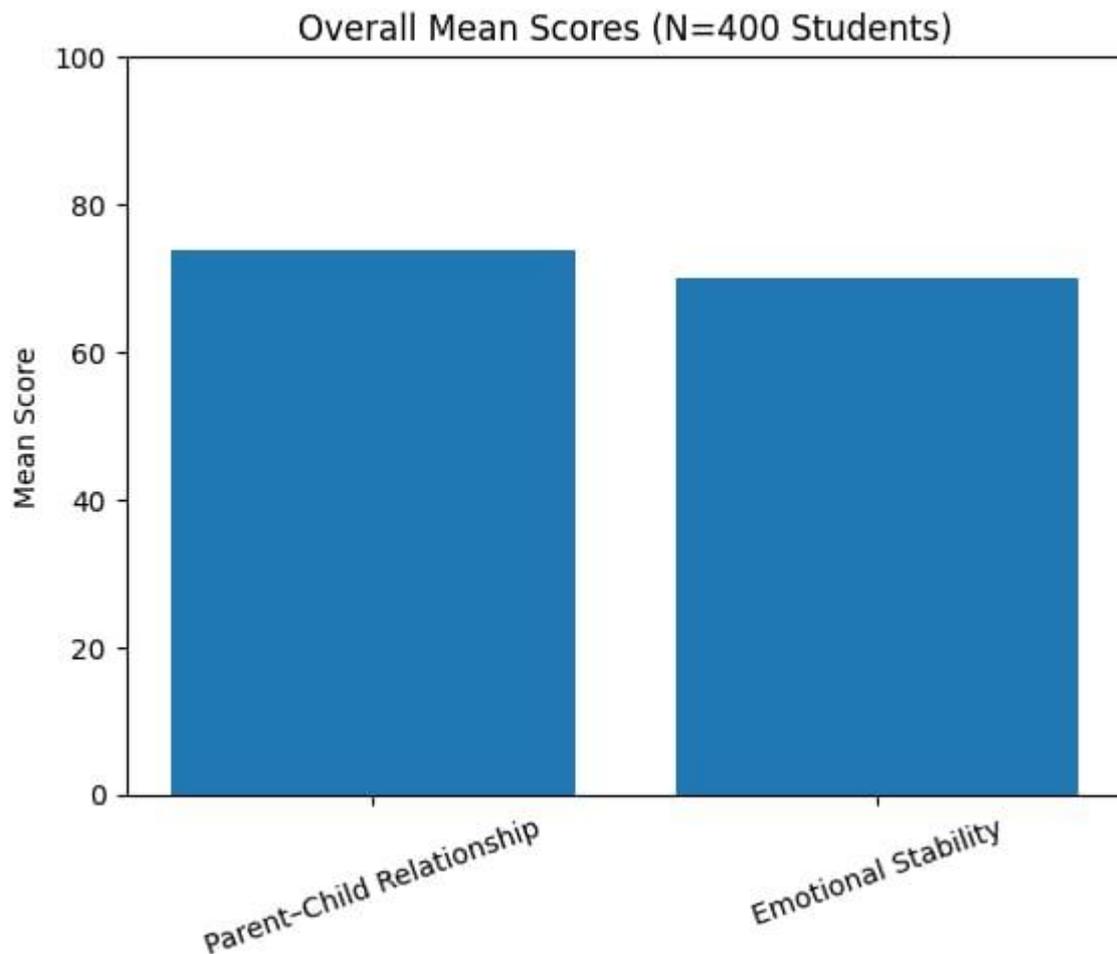
These findings are consistent with parenting style theories proposed by Diana Baumrind, which indicate that supportive and authoritative parenting fosters emotional competence and psychological maturity.

✚ **Objective 3:** To compare parent–child relationship and emotional stability scores between boys and girls.

t-test for Gender Difference

Table 3

Variable	t- value	Df	Level of Significant
Parent child Relationship	3.12	398	At 0.01
Emotional Stability	2.85	398	At 0.01



Interpretation: -

Table 3 presents the results of the independent samples t-test conducted to examine gender differences.

The calculated t-value for parent–child relationship (3.12) is significant at the 0.01 level, indicating that the observed difference between boys and girls is statistically significant and not due to chance. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant gender difference in parent–child relationship is rejected.

Similarly, the t-value for emotional stability (2.85) is also significant at the 0.01 level. This confirms that gender differences in emotional stability are statistically meaningful.

The degree of freedom (df = 398) corresponds to the total sample size minus two groups. The significance at 0.01 level indicates a high level of confidence (99%) in the results.

These findings suggest that gender plays an important role in shaping both the perception of parental relationships and emotional regulation patterns.

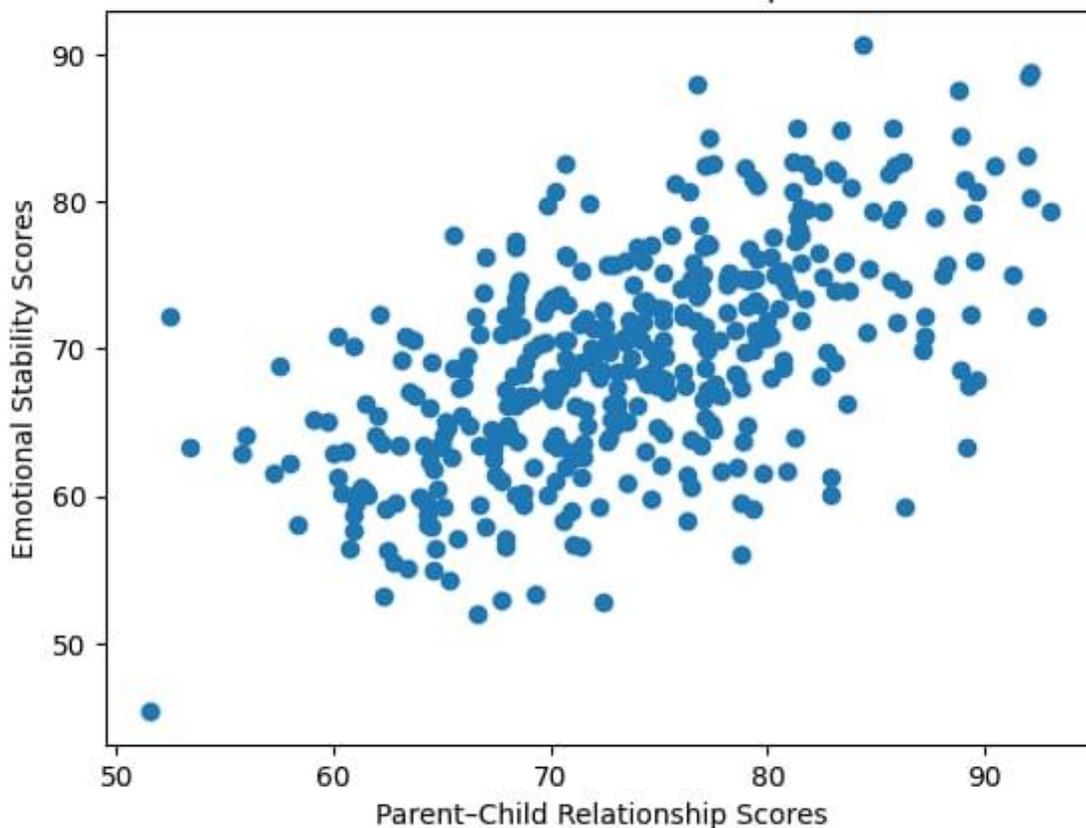
Objective 4: To find out the relationship between parent–child relationship and emotional stability.

Correlation between Parent–Child Relationship and Emotional Stability

Table 4

Variables	r -value
PCR & ES	0.62

Correlation between Parent–Child Relationship and Emotional Stability



Interpretation: -

Table 4 shows the Pearson’s correlation coefficient between parent–child relationship (PCR) and emotional stability (ES).

The obtained r-value of 0.62 indicates a moderate positive correlation between the two variables. This means that as the quality of parent–child relationship improves, emotional stability tends to increase as well.

An r-value above 0.50 generally reflects a substantial relationship in social science research. The positive direction of the correlation implies that supportive parenting, effective communication, and emotional warmth are strongly associated with better emotional control and resilience among adolescents.

This finding provides empirical support for theoretical frameworks such as Attachment Theory (John Bowlby) and parenting style research by Diana Baumrind, both of which highlight the foundational role of family environment in emotional development.

❖ **Major Findings**

- Girls have better parent–child relationships than boys.
- Girls demonstrate higher emotional stability compared to boys.
- A significant positive correlation exists between parent–child relationship and emotional stability.
- Supportive and communicative parenting enhances emotional regulation among adolescents.
- A nurturing, communicative, and ethically responsible parenting approach contributes to adolescents' psychological well-being and overall personality development.
- The findings suggest that structured but reasonable parental discipline (rather than excessive strictness) is associated with better emotional adjustment.

❖ **Educational Implications**

The findings of the present study have important implications for parents, teachers, school administrators, and educational policymakers. Since the results clearly indicate that a positive parent–child relationship significantly enhances emotional stability among school students, it becomes essential to strengthen family–school collaboration.

Parents should be encouraged to adopt supportive, democratic, and empathetic parenting practices that promote open communication and emotional security. Parenting awareness programmes and workshops may be organized by schools to educate parents about the impact of their behavior, attitudes, and interaction styles on their children's emotional well-being.

Teachers play a vital role in identifying emotionally unstable students and providing them with appropriate academic and emotional support. Teacher training programmes should include components related to emotional intelligence, child psychology, and family dynamics so that teachers can better understand students' emotional needs. Creating a classroom environment that is safe, inclusive, and emotionally supportive can help students develop self-confidence and emotional balance.

Schools should strengthen guidance and counselling services to address emotional and behavioral issues among students. Regular counselling sessions, life-skills education, and stress-management programmes can contribute to emotional stability. Incorporating value education and social-emotional learning into the curriculum can further enhance students' emotional competence.

At the policy level, educational institutions should recognize emotional stability as an essential component of holistic education. Curriculum planners and administrators should ensure that emotional development is given equal importance alongside cognitive and academic achievement.

❖ Conclusion

The present study aimed to examine the comparative levels of parent–child relationship and emotional stability among 400 school students and to determine the relationship between these two important psychological variables. The findings clearly indicate that a healthy and supportive parent–child relationship significantly contributes to higher emotional stability among adolescents. Students who reported warmth, open communication, trust, and balanced discipline within the family environment demonstrated better emotional control, reduced anxiety, and stronger social adjustment.

The results also revealed significant gender differences, with girls showing slightly higher mean scores in both parent–child relationship and emotional stability. This may be attributed to differences in emotional expression, communication patterns, and socialization practices within families. However, while the differences were statistically significant, the overall trend emphasizes that both boys and girls benefit equally from positive parental involvement.

The moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.62$) found between parent–child relationship and emotional stability highlights the interdependent nature of family dynamics and adolescent emotional development. These findings are consistent with the theoretical perspectives of John Bowlby, who emphasized secure attachment as the foundation of emotional security, and Diana Baumrind, whose work on parenting styles demonstrated that authoritative parenting fosters psychological competence and emotional balance.

In conclusion, the study affirms that the quality of the parent–child relationship serves as a foundational determinant of emotional stability during adolescence. By fostering supportive, communicative, and understanding family environments, parents can play a transformative role in shaping emotionally balanced, confident, and socially competent individuals. Future research may explore additional variables such as socioeconomic status, parenting style dimensions, and cultural influences to further deepen understanding in this important area of educational psychology.

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