

# Challenges of Parenting in Transitional State of Indian Society Today: A Critical Review.

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**Abstract:** *Concept of parenting in present culture has been a new challenge due to rapidly economic transformation and competitive life –style in India. Parenting in today's context becoming more challenging in the Indian society because of many families adopting mixed cultures, values, views and norms across the world. Indian culture has a value system which is adhere to family and effective parenting. Moreover parenting is associated with our educational system no matter how much we grow with technology and modernity. The paper analyses the parenting and the style of parenting changing its new dimension in accordance to our culture and education in this 21<sup>st</sup> century. However in this country, we train people for many jobs and roles. We train drivers, dog owners, and home builders. But when it comes to our most valuable resource — our children — we require no training, no prior knowledge, and no experience. One of the most important things you can do to become an effective parent is to learn about parenting.*

*Parenting is an active process. You have to use your skills and knowledge to plan, create, give birth, raise, and provide for your children. The parenting process includes nourishing, protecting, and guiding. It is a series of interactions between the parent and the child.*

**Key Words:** Parenting, culture, education, family, society

**“Parenting involves rearing a child. It includes the techniques, methods, and skills you use in raising your child. Providing direction and instilling family values are also parenting tasks once your child is older, along with teaching consequences, discipline, and responsibility”** Choudhury R.2003

## Introduction

Being a parent is one of the most rewarding and difficult tasks you will ever undertake. Whatever made you a parent — giving birth, adopting, raising a grandchild, being a foster- or stepparent

— the role generally becomes a part of your waking and sleeping hours.

In this country, we train people for many jobs and roles. We train drivers, dog owners, and home builders. But when it comes to our most valuable resource — our children — we require no training, no prior knowledge, and no experience.

One of the most important things you can do to become a better parent is to learn about parenting. Thoughtful study will help you become the best parent you can be. Research provides you with many interesting concepts to consider. This fact sheet, which is based on research, gives you information about parenting practices, stages of parenting, and the ways parents and children interact. This information will also be useful to people who help with parenting, such as teachers, coaches, grandparents, and neighbors.

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## Review of Literature

Parenting In India:

When a child is born, her first connection to the world is established through her mother, or in a broader sense, her parents. An infant sees the world through her parent's eyes; she tries to imbibe everything she recognizes in her parents. Thus, a parent-child relationship lays the foundation of the 'building of her life'. Parenting is the bringing up of a child. It is like the nourishment that is necessary for a sapling to grow into a big and fruitful tree. Hence, for a child to grow into a wonderful human being, good parenting is essential.

Parenting styles vary from culture to culture. The world is a big place comprising of a variety of people having different ways of living. Although culture is the key ingredient, the economic situation and standard of living also have an impact on parenting. While there are a common set of values

in different cultures like honesty and integrity, the value system stands divided on some of the major facets of parenting, exemplified by the comparison of the Indian style with that of the West.

India is a land of diverse traditions, all rooted in the same value system. With the trend of joint families still prevalent in India, a child is brought up in an environment where she learns to value people and relations. More than taking care of the physical growth of the child during her younger years, a grandmother in the house plays a vital role in instilling the moral values in the child. She learns to respect her elders from what she sees around in the house. This is an important factor in determining how the child deals with the people outside her family. The Indian parenting style builds the respect for other people, their values and customs. Indian parents believe strongly that their child is part of a family and a community and that it is of prime importance that the child realizes that every decision she makes and every action she takes has consequences for the entire family and community. This makes her responsible towards the family and most importantly, the community. Comparing this with the West, parents believe strongly in the idea that their child is an individual whose individual rights should be respected. In conforming to this ideal, they fear criticizing or punishing their child. Thus, the child grows up to value personal interests more than those of the community. On the other hand, the Indian principle of giving more value to others, builds up a sense of belonging and harmony with the community and thus the environment, which needs our attention now, more than ever.

On the academic front, Indian parents assign a lot of importance to scores and their child's performance in school. They keep themselves updated about the child's academic as well as their social life. The Indian formula is very simple — *'help the children achieve their utmost, which is often more than what they think'*. Watching TV or hanging out with friends might make the child happier, but in the long run, if she keeps up her academics, she would be able to earn well and succeed in life. Thus, while extra-curricular activities are appreciated, the focus is mainly on academics. On the other hand, while the Western parents do keep track of their child's school work, they emphasize more on happiness than a good academic record and so they let their child pursue her passion. But, the Indian parent has an argument here; *'if you let a ten-year-old child pursue her passion, she might end up sitting on Facebook for five hours in a day'*. This kind of freedom is detrimental to her growth. The Indian parents' emphasis on academics leads to the sense of

competitiveness in the child and thus, she has an edge over her Western counterpart when they are brought on the same stage. So, not only does Indian parenting promote respect for others and their values, it also brings up a more successful child. Thus, the *'building of the child's life'* grows up higher and higher since the foundation is strong enough to hold it.

While there are variations in the rural- urban (Indian) upbringing, the basic elements of parenting remain the same. For example, an urban child might hang out with friends more as compared to the rural child, but the importance of family is well understood by both of them. With the advent of modernization, the Indian parent is opening up to the wishes of the child but they are able to balance the welfare of the child with her wishes. Thus, Indian parenting is evolving and marching into the realm of most the favorable form of parenting.

A family, especially parents, are a child's backbone. But care must be taken that the child develops his own backbone and does not stay dependent on his parents for almost a quarter of his life, as happens in many cases in India. From the kind of clothes kids wear to the stream they choose in school, everything is decided by their parents. And this does not simply end here. The selection of the college, course, city of work and even the spouse hugely depends on their parents' decisions, if not entirely.

Parental love and affection are much needed and desired by children but in this process, parents do not understand that they are making the child overtly dependent on them. A child often stops pursuing his dreams and follows his parents' dreams. In early years of his life, his creativity is restricted. Every parent wants his child to be a doctor or an engineer, especially in a country like India. Very often the child's profession is decided even before his birth. The movie "3 Idiots" depicts this beautifully. Offbeat streams like fashion designing, writing, cartooning, photography etc. are not even considered to be career options. Indian parents are often more concerned about what they will have to say to the society rather than their child's wishes. In contrast, in the West, kids in their early teens become economically independent by going for short-term jobs like distributing newspapers or working in cafes. This is something Indian parents would never ever like as such jobs are considered to be menial.

Additionally, the Indian way of parenting is quite conservative. It is rare to see teenagers discussing topics like sex, drinking, smoking etc. freely with

their parents. In fact, a conversation on these topics is often avoided in Indian homes. As a result, children pick up information about these issues from the incorrect sources and end up adopting the wrong path. Parents need to understand that after an age they need to start becoming their child's friends than being their protectors as they can then help their kid grow better.

Parental interference is not just limited to deciding the career options but also includes deciding the perfect match for their children. India is probably the only country in the world where arranged marriages are highly encouraged and love marriages are frowned upon. And why is it? Can't a twenty-year-something decide who is good for him or her and whom to spend his life with?

Such a form of parenting leads children to be economically, socially and emotionally dependent on their parents. Children depend on them until they themselves become a parent. This is clearly not a progressive way of bringing up a child. A child must be independent enough to make his life decisions on his own and be ready to face the consequences. All parents ultimately want to protect their kids but being overprotective can lead to low self confidence in the child. In today's globalised and highly competitive world, an individual must be determined enough to take quick decisions and this can come only if his parents inculcate this habit right from one's childhood years. These are the building years of the individual, things learnt at this stage help shape a person's mind and character.

**Family Structure** - As a patriarchal culture, Indian families are generally run by the father or grandfather with family life and home structure based on decisions made by the male family members. Women are responsible for domestic duties and daily childcare tasks. Many Indian families live together in a multi-generational household, with children living with their parents until, and sometimes even after, marriage.

**Teaching Life Values** - With Hinduism as the most prominent form of religion in the Indian culture, many Indian families impart the importance of prayer and worship to their children. There is a strong emphasis on respect of elders in the Indian culture. Children typically grow up with their grandparents in the same household. Children are generally held by adults more and spend less time in cribs and playpens in the Indian culture versus Western culture. Many Indian families choose to begin toilet-training their children by the age of 12 months, another cultural difference.

### **Critical Parenting Practices**

You can strengthen your parenting skills through learning and experience. Consider, first, what influences you as a parent. Your temperament, your child's temperament, your childhood experiences, your relationship with your mate and your own parents, your family and work situation, your community and help your child learn to understand others.

### **Nurturance**

Nurturing is very important to children. Nurtured children usually grow up to be competent and healthy adults. Children have different needs and ways they need to be nurtured. When you meet your child's needs by building a positive relationship and by sending consistent messages of love and support, then you are an effective nurturer.

To develop your nurturing skills, learn comfortable ways to express love, build your child's hope and self-respect, learn to listen and hear your child's feelings and ideas, teach kindness, provide for your child's nutrition, shelter, clothing, health, and safety needs, celebrate life, and help your child feel connected to his or her family history and cultural heritage.

To develop your skills in providing guidance, you must model how you want your child to act. Set reasonable limits and give him or her opportunities to learn responsibilities. Choose appropriate opportunities, teach problem-solving skills, and monitor your child's activities with other children and adults.

### **Motivation**

You are motivating when you teach your child to think and learn. Parents who take their responsibilities seriously, and look for ways to teach throughout their children's lives, are more likely to have children who become confident, skilled learners who reach high educational levels.

The most successful motivators nurture and guide their children. You can learn how to foster learning as you can learn to motivate and to nurture. If you are motivated yourself, you will be more capable of motivating your child. And if you feel nurtured, you will find it natural to nurture your child.

To develop your skills to motivate your child, you will need to learn how to teach your child. Children need to learn about themselves, others, and the world around them. To be a good teacher, you need to let your child be curious, develop an imagination, and search for knowledge. Work to create positive learning settings and help your child think about new information.

**Advocating**

Effective parents locate helpful community resources and work to meet their children's and family's needs. Seek out programs and people to provide services important to your child and family. Notice and speak up about your child's needs. When something in the community becomes a barrier to your family's functioning, speak up for change

**Hypothesis for the study**

Three hypotheses were designed to conduct the study:

- I. Authoritative parenting style of father and mother has significant relationship with secure, anxious and avoidant attachment style.
- II. Authoritarian parenting style of father and mother has significant relationship with secure, anxious and avoidant attachment style.
- III. Permissive parenting style of father and mother has significant relationship with secure, anxious and avoidant attachment style.

**METHODOLOGY**

The population of the study was undergraduate students of two districts (Cuttack and Khurda). The age of respondents lies between 12 to 15 years. The sample of 200 (100 male and 100 female) students was selected by using cluster sampling technique. 200 questionnaires were distributed to the sample students. 184 questionnaires were returned. The response rate was 90%.

The data was analyzed in the light of hypothesis designed for the study. Pearson's Correlation was used to investigate the relationship between parenting style of parents and attachment styles of their children.

**Table: 1.** Correlation between Authoritative parenting style of father and attachment style of children

Attachment Styles	R	P
Secure	0.086	0.261
Anxious	-0.082	0.346
Avoidant	0.071	0.515

Total number of respondents= 184

**Table: 2.** Correlation between Authoritative parenting style of mother and attachment style of children

Attachment Styles	R	P
Secure	0.014	0.855
Anxious	-0.030	0.765
Avoidant	0.119	0.148

Total number of respondents= 184

**Table 1 and 2 highlights** complex relationship exists between authoritative parenting style of father and mother and attachment styles of their children. The hypothesis I is denied and it is said that complex relationship found between authoritative parenting styles and secure, anxious and avoidant attachment styles for this sample.

**Table: 3** Correlation between Authoritarian parenting style of father and attachment style of children

Attachment Styles	R	P
Secure	0.056	0.478
Anxious	0.364	0.002
Avoidant	0.209	0.004

\*\* Significant at  $p > .01$  Total number of respondents= 184

**Table: 4.** Correlation between Authoritarian parenting style of mother and attachment style of children

Attachment Styles	R	P
Secure	0.005	0.712
Anxious	0.254	**0.003
Avoidant	0.178	*.055

\*Significant at  $p > .05$  \*\*Significant at  $p > .01$  Total number of respondents= 184

Table 3 and 4 indicates significant relationship between authoritative parenting style of father and mother with anxious and avoidant attachment style. Where hardly relationship is found with secure attachment style. The hypothesis II is accepted and it is stated that the relationship exists between authoritarian parenting style and anxious attachment style.

**Table: 5.** Correlation between Permissive parenting style of father and attachment style of children

Attachment Styles	R	P
Secure	0.153	*.053478
Anxious	0.176	*.018
Avoidant	0.287	**0.020

\* Significant at  $p > .05$  \*\*Significant at  $p > .01$  Total number of respondents= 184

**Table: 6** Correlation between Permissive parenting style of mother and attachment style of children

Attachment Styles	R	P
Secure	0.176	**0.006
Anxious	0.474	*.001
Avoidant	0.166	**0.002

\* Significant at  $p > .05$  \*\*Significant at  $p > .01$  Total number of respondents= 184

Table 5 and 6 reflects that permissive Parenting style of father and mother has significant relationship with secure, anxious and avoidant attachment styles in table 6 indicates relatively strong relationship between permissive parenting style of mother anxious attachment style of child when compared with other attachment styles.

## DISCUSSION

There is no single or definitive model of parenting. With authoritarian and permissive (indulgent) parenting on opposite sides of the spectrum, most conventional and modern models of parenting fall somewhere in between. Parenting strategies as well as behaviors and ideals of what parents expect, whether communicated verbally and/or non-verbally, also play a significant role in a child's development.

A parenting style is the overall emotional climate in the home. Developmental psychologist Diana Baumrind identified three main parenting styles in early child development: Authoritative, Authoritarian, and permissive. These parenting styles were later expanded to four, including an uninvolved style. These four styles of parenting involve combinations of acceptance and responsiveness on the one hand and demand and control on the other. Recent research has found that parenting style is significantly related to children's subsequent mental health and well-being. In particular, authoritative parenting is positively related to mental health and satisfaction with life,

and authoritarian parenting is negatively related to these variables.

## Conclusion

This study was aimed to critically analyze the extent relationship between parenting styles of parents and attachment styles of students. Authoritative parent style has complex significant relationship with any of secure, anxious and avoidant attachment style. Authoritarian parenting style has significant relationship with anxious attachment style. Permissive parenting style of mother has significant relationship with avoidant attachment style. Permissive parenting style of mother has significant relationship with anxious attachment style. The outcomes of the present study will provide some insights to the parents, psychologists and researchers and academicians on the adolescent's behavior and parenting how it nurtures with a great impact on healthy psycho-social development of a child and establishing peace and harmony in the family with the parental behavior.

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