



Original Research Article

## Child and Parent Relationship of School Going Children

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### ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** The childhood period is vital as socialization process begins by the transmission of attitude, customs, and behavior through the influence of the family and community. Child parent relationship plays a fundamental role in transforming children into ideal citizen. The present study aimed to assess the child and parent relationship of school going children.

**Methods:** In a exploratory, cross sectional survey, 200 randomly selected (lottery method) students from four conveniently selected schools of district Faridkot, Punjab were assessed by using the socio demographic data sheet and modified child parent relationship scale based on Dr. Nalini Rao's scale. The descriptive statistics, unpaired t test, ANOVA test was used for analysis.

**Results:** Majority (74%) of the students had cordial, 21.5% had good, 4% had above average and 0.5% had below average child father relationship. Three fourth of the students (77.5%) had cordial, 18.5% had good and 4% had above average child mother relationship.

**Conclusion:** The findings of the present investigation suggested that most of the children had cordial relationship with their parents in the study setting. Sill some psycho-education or other interventions may serve as avenue to strengthen the child parent relationship. Counseling services should be provided to both parents and teachers so that transition is smooth from childhood to adolescents.

**Key Words:** Parent, Children, Relationship.

### INTRODUCTION

India, with 1.27 billion people is the second most populous country in the world. The figures show that India represents almost 17.31% of the world's population. More than 50% of India's current population is below the age of 25 years. [1] As per India Demographic Profile 2014, for age structure 0-14 year, population is 28.5%. [2]

The childhood is vital because of socialization process by the transmission of

attitude, customs and behavior through the influence of family and community. [3] The significant contribution made during the early ages of an individual's life determines the whole some personality. School age is an important period in which the child learns through a formal teaching.

Children who develop secure attachment relationships with their parents are at an advantage cognitively, socially, and emotionally compared to peers who have not developed secure attachments. [4]

Parent child relationship refers to the bond that the parent forms with his or her child. Parent child relationships are an important aspect of the child development and socialization, as they are characterized by discipline. Discipline involves setting standards by which children should live. Standards are visually important for the development of self esteem, since they provide the means to measure self progress, validate competence and show that others have interest in the individual. [5]

The quality of the parent-child relationship is affected by the parent's age, experience, and self-confidence; the stability of the parent's marriage; and the unique characteristics of the child compared with those of the parent. [6] A poor parent child relationship is one of five adverse childhood experiences that can have a lasting effect on a child's mental and physical health. [7]

Most parents showed more positive parent-child relationship than negative. [8] Feinberg ME & Kan ML (2008) [9] reported that a prevention program implemented through childbirth education program enhanced the co-parental relationship, parental mental health, the parent-child relationship and infant emotional and physiological regulation. Thornton Arland et al. (1995) [10] found more positive relationships with mothers than with fathers and there is an improvement in relationships as children mature from age 18 to 23. Parent-child relationships are perceived differently by parents and children.

Maintaining better relationship with kids is not an easy task as their emotions are very much delicate and immature. Children do not interpret what they observe and feel, but just react in the most spontaneous way to what they see. They understand things just the way they feel them; thus dealing with them requires skill and maintaining proper and better relationship with children is a hard to crack nut. Taking a bit of extra effort

will make parents affectionately attached with children. [11]

In this era, parenting and parenting intervention program are rightly seen as a public health matter. Improving the quality of parent-child relationships can be expected to have positive effects on the individual and family (e.g. in terms of distress) and on the society as a whole (e.g. in terms of social and economic costs of incarcerating delinquent youths). Cordial child parent relationship need to shape them to be the productive wellbeing for the future and plays a vital role in transforming children into ideal citizen. Thus, considering the need of the participant's, researcher selected this topic. The main objectives of this study were to assess child and parent relationship of school going children and to find its relationship with selected socio-demographic variables.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

A descriptive cross sectional survey was done to assess child parent relationship of school going children and relationship with selected socio-demographic variables. The present study was conducted at four conveniently selected schools of district Faridkot. The schools were selected on the basis of expected availability of children, giving permission to conduct the study and convenience in terms of distance. The population for the study was 200 children (10-12 years) in selected randomly from selected schools of District Faridkot, Punjab. The group included only those children who were present at the time of data collection and who were willing to participate in the study. Total two measures were used to collect data from the subjects.

**Tool 1: Socio demographic data sheet:** It was developed by researchers which consist of 14 items to measure demographic data of the subjects. These items were age, gender, class, type of school, residence, type of

family, number of siblings, birth order, recent death in family, primary care giver, time spent with father, time spent with mother, substance abuse or alcohol abuse by primary care giver, more attachment to father or mother and participants were instructed to put a tick mark on appropriate response of each item. Total administration time for this tool was approximately 5 minutes. Content validity of tool was determined by experts in the field of psychiatry, psychiatric nursing and psychology respectively. Content appropriateness, clarity and relevance were ascertained by language expert. Reliability was done by test – retest method and was 0.95.

**Tool 2: Modified Child parent relationship scale:** The original parent child relationship scale (PCRS) of Dr. Nalini Rao's is a 100 item scale and it consists of total 10 dimensions. But according to need of study, researcher selected only four dimensions and there are 10 items in each dimension. These four dimensions are: a) Protecting b) Loving c) Rejecting d) Neglecting. Items of the scale are in question form asking information for each in any of the 5 options: Always, Many times, Sometimes, Rarely, Very Rarely. The items were scored as 5,4,3,2 and 1 respectively. Participants were asked to give mark for the appropriate response of each item and total administration time was 15 minutes. The higher the score on the scale, greater the degree of child parent relationship the and vice versa. Reliability of the scale was determined by test retest reliability which was 0.87. The tools were translated into Punjabi language under the guidance of language experts and amendments were made according to suggestions. Back translation in English was done to ensure the content and meaning. Try out of the tools was done on twenty children of MGM Senior Secondary school, Faridkot. It was

conducted to ensure the reliability and understanding of the tool. The required changes were made in tool one after try out. Pilot study was conducted in Government senior Secondary girl's school, Faridkot to find feasibility of the study. The study was found to be feasible.

### ***Ethical considerations***

Study approval was taken from ethical committee of the University College of Nursing, Baba Farid University of Health Sciences and written permission was granted by the authorities of the schools to protect the rights of the subjects. Study procedure was explained and written information was given to the subjects. Informed written ascent from the subjects was taken. Participants who were willing to participate were included in the study. Anonymity of study subjects and confidentiality was maintained.

### ***Statistical Analysis***

Statistical analysis was done by using SPSS (16) software. The descriptive statistics (percentage, mean, standard deviation) and in inferential statistics (unpaired t test, ANOVA test) was used for statistical analysis. The t-test and ANOVA were used to assess the child parent relationship and to find relationship of child parent relationship with selected socio-demographic variables. The p value at <0.05 was considered is as statistically significant.

## **RESULTS**

As shown in table 1, maximum number of children were females of age 12 year studying in class seventh, from rural area, birth order one, no recent death in family, mother as a primary care giver and primary care giver not had history of substance/ alcohol abuse. Half study subjects were from Govt. schools and joint families. One third were had 1 siblings. Half of fathers spend 1-2 hrs with study subjects

one third mothers spend 3-4 hrs with study subjects. More than half study subjects feel more attachment with mother.

**Table 1: Distribution of subjects according to socio demographic variables (N=200)**

Characteristics	f	%
Age		
10	19	9.5
11	30	15.0
12	151	75.5
Gender		
Male	92	46.0
Female	108	54.0
Standard		
5 <sup>th</sup>	10	5.0
6 <sup>th</sup>	70	35.0
7 <sup>th</sup>	120	60.0
School		
Government	100	50
Private	100	50
Residence		
Urban	80	40.0
Rural	120	60.0
Type of family		
Joint	101	50.5
Nuclear	99	49.5
No. of siblings		
0	35	17.5
1	68	34.0
2	56	28.0
3	28	14.0
4 or >4	13	6.5
Birth order		
1	89	44.5
2	73	36.5
3	28	14.0
4 or >4	10	5.0
Recent death in family		
Yes	45	22.5
No	155	77.5
Who is primary care giver		
Father	46	23.0
Mother	144	72.0
Any other	10	5.0
Time spend with father		
1-2 hours	99	49.5
3-4 hours	60	30.0
5-6 hours	37	18.5
7-8 hours	4	2.0
Time spend with mother		
1-2 hours	31	15.5
3-4 hours	77	38.5
5-6 hours	73	36.5
7-8 hours	19	9.5
Any type of substance/ alcohol abuse by primary care giver		
Yes	56	28.0
No	144	72.0
Feels more attachment with		
Father	73	36.5
Mother	127	63.5

**Table 2: Mean score and Standard deviation of child parent relationship among subjects (N=200)**

Area	Maximum Possible Score	Maximum Obtained Score	Minimum Obtained Score	Mean score (SD)
Child father relationship	200	196	63	168.82 (20.37)
Child mother relationship	200	196	103	171.91 (19.23)

As shown in table 2, the mean score of child father relationship was found to be 168.82 and standard deviation 20.37. The minimum score obtained was 63 and maximum was 196. The mean score of child mother relationship was found to be 171.91 and standard deviation 19.23. The minimum score obtained was 103 and maximum was 196.

**Table 3: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of child parent relationship among children (N=200)**

Categories	Child father relationship f (%)	Child mother relationship f (%)
Cordial	148(74%)	155(77.5%)
Good	43(21.5%)	37(18.5%)
Above average	8(4%)	8(4%)
Below average	1(0.5%)	0
Unfavorable	0	0

As shown in table 3, majority (74%) of children had cordial, 21.5% had good, 4% had above average and 0.5% had below average child father relationship. Majority (77.5%) had cordial, 18.5% had good and 4% had above average child mother relationship. Hence, it was concluded that majority of children had cordial parent child relationship.

As shown in table 4, the mean score for child father relationship for protecting dimension was found to be 42.81, whereas for loving dimension was found to be 42.54, for rejecting dimension was found to be 17.36 and for neglecting dimension was found to be 18.10. The mean score for child mother relationship for protecting dimension was found to be 43.58 whereas for loving dimension was found to be 43.42, for rejecting dimension was found to be 17.21

and for neglecting dimension was found to be 17.48.

**Table 4: Mean score and Standard deviation of child parent relationship for different dimension among subjects. (N=200)**

Area	Father		Mother	
	Range	Mean score (SD)	Range	Mean score (SD)
Protecting Dimension	15-49	42.81(5.375)	25-49	43.58(5.13)
Loving Dimension	15-49	42.54(5.522)	19-49	43.42(5.55)
Rejecting Dimension	11-45	17.36(6.076)	10-49	17.21(6.53)
Neglecting Dimension	10-42	18.10(6.297)	10-46	17.48(6.71)

**Table 5: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of child parent relationship for positive dimensions among subjects. (N=200)**

Categories	Father child relationship		Mother child relationship	
	Protecting dimension f (%)	Loving dimension f (%)	Protecting dimension f (%)	Loving dimension f (%)
Extremely favorable	30 (15%)	33 (16.5%)	49 (24.5%)	50 (25%)
Highly favorable	100 (50%)	83 (41.5%)	86 (43%)	88 (44%)
Above average favorable	44 (22%)	60 (30%)	43 (21.5%)	40 (20%)
Average/ moderate favorable	22 (11%)	20 (10%)	18 (9%)	17 (8.5%)
Below average favorable	3 (1.5%)	2 (1%)	4 (2%)	2 (1%)
Unfavorable	0	1 (0.5%)	0	3 (1.5%)
Extremely unfavorable	1 (0.5%)	1 (0.5%)	0	0

As shown in table 5, for child father relationship, for protecting dimension 15% had extremely favorable, 50% highly favorable and only 0.5% had extremely unfavorable father child relationship. For loving dimension, 16.5% had extremely favorable, 41.5% had highly favorable and only 0.5% had extremely unfavorable father child relationship. For child mother

relationship, for protecting dimension 24.5% had extremely favorable, 43% had highly favorable and only 2% had below average favorable mother child relationship. For loving dimension, 25% had extremely favorable, 44% had highly favorable and only 1.5% had unfavorable mother child relationship.

**Table 6: Frequency and percentage distribution of child parent relationship for negative dimensions among subjects. (N=200)**

Categories	Father child relationship		Mother child relationship	
	Rejecting dimension f (%)	Neglecting dimension f (%)	Rejecting dimension f (%)	Neglecting dimension f (%)
Extremely positive	0	0	0	0
Highly positive	63 (31.5%)	44 (22%)	73(36.5%)	65(32.5%)
Above average positive	69 (34.5%)	79 (39.5%)	56(28%)	70(35%)
Neutral	48 (24%)	44 (22%)	44(22%)	40(20%)
Above average negative	14 (7%)	21 (10.5%)	21(10.5%)	16(8%)
Highly negative	2 (1%)	4 (2%)	1(0.5%)	6(3%)
Extremely negative	4 (2%)	8 (4%)	5(2.5%)	3(1.5%)

As shown in table 6, for child father relationship, for rejecting dimension 31.5% had highly positive and 2% had extremely negative child father relationship. For neglecting dimension 22% had highly positive and only 4% had extremely negative child father relationship. For child

mother relationship, for rejecting dimension 36.5% children had highly positive and only 2.5% had extremely negative mother child relationship. For neglecting dimension 32.5% had highly positive and only 1.5 % had extremely negative mother child relationship.

**Table 7: Relationship of child father relationship with selected socio-demographic characteristics among subjects. (N=200)**

Socio demographic characteristics		Mean(SD)	F/t	df	p Value
Age	10 year	154.84 (26.53)	5.314	2	0.006**
	11 year	168.43 (18.39)			
	12 year	170.66 (19.30)			
Gender	Male	172.71 (19.03)	2.520	198	0.013*
	Female	165.52 (20.97)			
Class/Standard	5 <sup>th</sup>	182.40 (7.23)	2.768	2	0.065
	6 <sup>th</sup>	166.41 (20.58)			
	7 <sup>th</sup>	169.10 (20.63)			
School	Govt.	163.50 (20.05)	-3.820	198	0.001**
	Private	174.15 (18.81)			
Residence	Urban	175.02 (15.88)	3.619	198	.000***
	Rural	164.69 (21.99)			
Type of family	Nuclear	168.28 (19.76)	-.383	198	0.702
	Joint	169.38 (21.07)			
No. of Sibling (s)	0	173.63(24.183)	4.258	4	.003**
	1	174.43(14.549)			
	2	161.70(23.531)			
	3	163.32(17.414)			
	4 or >4	169.15(16.522)			
Birth order	1	172.26(19.831)	2.291	3	0.079
	2	168.12(19.774)			
	3	162.46(22.401)			
	4 or >4	161.20(19.759)			
Recent death in family	Yes	166.53(24.745)	-.856	198	0.393
	No	169.49(18.962)			
Primary care giver	Father	169.63(17.932)	1.591	2	0.206
	Mother	167.83(20.931)			
	Any other	179.50(21.568)			
Time spent with father	1-2 hours	164.95(21.317)	2.760	3	0.043*
	3-4 hours	171.38(17.518)			
	5-6 hours	173.76(21.396)			
	7-8 hours	180.75(7.182)			
Time spent with mother	1-2 hours	165.10(18.487)	3.996	3	0.009**
	3-4 hours	165.18(22.500)			
	5-6 hours	171(19.332)			
	7-8 hours	181.32(11.111)			
Substance / alcohol abuse by primary care giver	Yes	160.86(21.328)	-3.548	198	0.124
	No	171.92(19.191)			
More attached to father/mother	Father	170.90(21.780)	1.095	198	0.275
	Mother	167.63(19.512)			

\*\*\* significant at <.001 level

\*\*significant at <.01 level

\*Significant at <.05 level

As shown in table 7, there was significant relationship of child father relationship with age, gender, school, residence, number of siblings, and time spent with father, time spent with mother and at p value < 0.05. There was non significant relationship of child father relationship with class, type of family, birth order, recent death in family, primary care giver, substance abuse by primary care giver and more attachment with father or mother at p value < 0.05.

As shown in table 8, there was significant relationship of child mother relationship with age, gender, class, school, residence, number of siblings, time spent with mother and substance abuse by primary care giver p value < 0.05. There was non significant relationship of child mother relationship with type of family, birth order, recent death in family, primary care giver, time spent with father and more attachment with father or mother at p value < 0.05.

**Table 8: Relationship of child mother relationship with selected socio-demographic characteristics of subjects (N=200)**

Socio demographic characteristics		Mean(SD)	F/t	df	p Value
Age	10 Year	160.11(27.517)	5.385	2	0.005**
	11 Year	168.17(21.184)			
	12 Year	174.14(16.970)			
Gender	Male	176.96(15.646)	3.520	198	0.001**
	Female	167.61(20.968)			
Class/Standard	5 <sup>th</sup>	187.30(3.917)	3.866	2	0.023*
	6 <sup>th</sup>	169.49(22.006)			
	7 <sup>th</sup>	172.04(17.710)			
School	Govt.	164.93(21.244)	-5.494	198	0.000**
	Private	178.89(13.938)			
Residence	Urban	178.65(14.084)	4.212	198	0.000**
	Rural	167.42(20.890)			
Type of family	Nuclear	169.42(21.489)	-1.863	198	0.064
	Joint	174.41(16.355)			
No. of Sibling (s)	0	179.74(15.521)	5.681	4	0.000**
	1	176.51(16.296)			
	2	165.48(22.270)			
	3	163.93(18.427)			
	4 or > 4	171.62(17.178)			
Birth order	1	175.87(16.939)	2.530	3	0.058
	2	169.42(20.162)			
	3	166.29(23.020)			
	4 or > 4	170.60(15.226)			
Recent death in family	Yes	171.51(20.512)	-1.158	198	0.875
	No	172.03(18.922)			
Primary care giver	Father	170(19.743)	1.069	2	0.345
	Mother	171.97(18.814)			
	Any other	179.80(22.876)			
Time spent with father	1-2 hours	168.93(18.722)	2.017	3	0.113
	3-4 hours	173.08(18.514)			
	5-6 hours	177.57(21.260)			
	7-8 hours	175.75(14.245)			
Time spent with mother	1-2 hours	167.06(21.693)	3.985	3	0.009**
	3-4 hours	168.86(18.494)			
	5-6 hours	174.27(19.450)			
	7-8 hours	183.11(10.739)			
Substance / alcohol abuse by primary care giver	Yes	165.04(19.312)	-3.225	198	0.001**
	No	174.58(18.600)			
More attached to father/mother	Father	173.27(20.293)	.759	198	0.449
	Mother	171.13(18.643)			

\*\*\*significant at <.001 level

\*\*significant at <.01 level

\*Significant at <.05 level

## DISCUSSION

Present study was an attempt to understand the relationship of school going children with their parents. Findings of the present study revealed that majority of children had cordial relationship with their mothers as compared to fathers. These findings are supported by Thornton et al. (1995) [10] found that children had more positive relationships with mothers than with fathers. This might be because mothers carry their babies in their womb and have a hormonal attachment too. Father doesn't get this and have to meet and form a bond with

baby. This may be due to bond between a mother and her children are different than the bonding between the father and his children. Usually the mother, whether working or not, takes care of her children's clothes, feedings, school activities and sleeping times and the father takes care of the play times, and more of the external and superficial, although still important roles. That's why children feel attachment to mothers.

Findings of the present study revealed that child parent relationship is significantly affected by gender of children.

This might be because of traditionally parents preferred sons because of their potential to financially support their parents, carry on the family name, and lead ancestor worship and this holds particularly true for rural areas where sons provide much-needed labor. Similarly, Singh Neetu & Bajwa Ashu K.(2012) <sup>[12]</sup> concluded that majority of daughters had an average relationship with fathers and in the age group of 15 years enjoyed a slightly better relationship with their fathers as compared to other age groups. Similarly, Shaban Shaheeda & Matto Nadhia Hussain (2012) <sup>[13]</sup> revealed that highly significant difference was observed between use of symbolic punishment, rejecting, loving dimension and gender of the child. This may be attributed to the fact that as male adolescents are more likely to become delinquents so parents enforce strict discipline so that they can have complete control over their children. Significant difference on loving dimension may be due to fact that in a conservative society daughters are still looked as liability, no doubt their position has been improves a lot but still parents usually treat their sons more warmly and affectionately as compared to their daughters. On the contrary side, Naik Pramod Kumar & Saimons Smriti Kiran (2014) <sup>[14]</sup> found that no effect of gender on parenting of adolescents. Lal Krishan (2013) <sup>[15]</sup> reported that no significant difference between parent child relationship of boys and girl. Sharma Monika (2012) <sup>[16]</sup> found that boys and girls differ not significantly differ in mother child relationship.

Findings of the present study revealed that male children had better relationship with their parents as compared to female children. These findings are supported by Dash Manaswini & Sriranjani Priti (2014) <sup>[17]</sup> found that parents are overprotective for their male children. On the contrary side, Lian Tam Cai & Han

Yeoh Si <sup>[18]</sup> who reported that females were have better parental bonding as well as parent-child relationship compared to males. This might be because, boys challenge their parents more than girls, pushing parental boundaries. The girls might just react differently. Boys tend to act out, girls are more likely to turn feelings inward which might leads to more attachment with parents in comparison of girls.

Findings of the present study revealed that children of private schools had better child parent relationship as compared to children of government schools. This may be due to fact that children in private schools are from upper class families and received focused fulfillment of needs like love, affection and care from their parents as compared to children in government schools. On the contrary side, Lal Krishan (2013) <sup>[15]</sup> reported that students of government schools had good parent child parent relationship.

Implications and recommendations: Community health nurse should made educational interventions to improve child parent relationship. Psycho-education interventions may serve as avenue to improve child parent relationship. Administrators should act as a motivator, leader and counselor.

The study recommends that counseling services should be provided to both parents and teachers so that transition is smooth from childhood to adolescents. Parents should spend quality of time with their children. Studies should be conducted on large sample size with different variables on different population. Study may be conducted on differences in perception of parents and children regarding parent-child relationship. In future research, obtaining data from both parent and child will provide results that better reflect the complexity of the relationship.

## CONCLUSION

On the basis of above findings, we can conclude that majority of children had cordial relationship with their parents, and children had more cordial relationship with their mothers as compared to fathers, also male children had better child parent relationship as compared to female children. Cordial child parent relationship need to shape them to be the productive wellbeing for the future and plays a vital role in transforming children into ideal citizen. Hence, strategies should be planned towards developing more cordial relationship among female children which leads to better and secured future for them.

**Limitations:** Lack of large sample size may result in lack of representativeness and generalizability to the larger population. Moreover, the data was collected from selected schools of district Faridkot of Punjab. In order to make findings generalizable, a large geographical area based study is recommended to assess the child and parent relationship. Despite of these limitations, the study had a strong design and care was taken at every step to ensure the randomness in the sample and minimize bias in the findings.

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