

# **CORRELATES BETWEEN PARENTING STYLES AND THE EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE: A STUDY OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN LAGOS STATE**

**Olujide A. Adekeye, Amos A. Alao, Sussan O. Adeusi, Jonathan Odukoya,  
Chinemenma S. Godspower**

*Department of Psychology, Covenant University (NIGERIA)*

## **Abstract**

**Background:** Emotional intelligence is a relatively recent behavioural model, rising to prominence with the work of Daniel Goleman. The study of parent-child relations has grown tremendously in recent years coupled with its implication on the emotional intelligence of students. This study examined the influence of parenting styles on emotional intelligence of senior school students in Lagos State, the commercial capital of Nigeria and a metropolitan city.

**Methods:** Two hundred and fifty (250) students were randomly selected from five selected schools with age ranging from 15 to 19 years (mean age = 17 years) through stratified and systematic sampling techniques. The study being a survey research, made use of a questionnaire consisting of two validated subscales; the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue) and the Parenting Style Inventory (PSI). Three hypotheses were raised and tested. Hypotheses one and three were analyzed using Pearson's product moment correlation while regression analysis was employed to analyze hypothesis two.

**Result:** In testing the relationship between parenting styles and emotional intelligence, result shows that father's authoritative parenting style ( $r = 0.152$ ,  $p < .005$ ) and mother's authoritative parenting style ( $r = 0.227$ ,  $p < .01$ ) contributed to the prediction of emotional intelligence. Regression analysis shows that of the six predictor variables, only mother's authoritative parenting style ( $\beta = 1.952$ ,  $t = 2.345$ ,  $p < .05$ ) could significantly predict the emotional intelligence of senior school students.

**Conclusion:** Being emotionally intelligent adds value to life. Emotions are important to our everyday lives; hence, young people should be assisted on how to control their emotions. Parents, teachers and significant others need to provide guidance for the development emotional intelligence of these young impressionable students.

**Keywords:** Parenting styles, secondary school, students, emotional intelligence.

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

Despite the giant strides of Binet & Simon (1916) and other test experts, Gardner (1993, 2006) and Goleman (1995) among others argued that it is not intelligence quotient (IQ) but emotional intelligence (EQ) that determines one's success in life. The person who is high on emotional intelligence is found to be better in handling the situations of life than one who has low levels of emotional intelligence. Since emotional intelligence is the ability to perceive, understand, and manage one's emotion, it is thought to be a crucial determinant of a student's behavioural disposition.

The way parents discipline their children leads to deep and lasting consequences for the child's emotional life. A harsh treatment has its implication and empathic understanding does too. Extant literatures on how parents treat their children shows some parents as being indifferent to their children while some display warmth (Goleman, 1998). According to Nihara, Tamiyasu and Yoshikazo (1987), the relationship between affective and emotional aspects of parental behaviour and the child's emotional adjustment is family and culture specific. This brings to light the importance of the family as much learning occurs through interaction between a child and his family members especially the parents. The family is thus the bedrock for the growth of emotional intelligence. As Goleman (1995) rightly pointed out "family is our first school for emotional learning. A close emotional bonding and adequate communication between children and parents with clear specifications for behaviour can make children emotionally and socially competent, responsible, independent and confident". Thus, emotional intelligence is closely associated with parenting.

Parenting refers to the aspects of raising a child and there are several styles often employed by parents to raise their children. Parenting style is therefore a psychological construct that is defined as standard strategies used by parents to bring up their children. Baumrind (1967, 1971, 1989, & 1991) in a series of studies identified three parenting styles namely authoritative, authoritarian and permissive. These three styles vary according to the degree of warmth and control exercised and is useful in understanding its contribution to the emotional well-being of children. Because parenting styles and practices predict so many developmental outcomes, it makes sense to believe that they also predict children's emotional intelligence.

Emotional intelligence is a conjoint of different abilities, and therefore, it has been presumed that it can be trained and perfected (Goleman, 1995). Through training, individuals are expected to develop positive behaviours and establish positive social relationships (Baron & Parker, 2000). Emotional intelligence also refers to the capacity for recognizing one's own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves and for managing emotions well in ourselves and our relationships. Unlike intelligence quotient (IQ) which changes little after adolescent years, emotional intelligence (EI) is largely learnt, is not fixed genetically or develops in early childhood but continues to develop and is predominantly environmentally determined (Goleman, 1995). Emotional intelligence has four branches including the ability to accurately perceive and express emotion, assimilate emotion into thought, understand emotion, and regulate emotions in the self and others (Mayer & Salovey, 1997).

Perceiving emotion is the ability to identify emotion in the self and others. Facilitating emotion is the ability to use information that explains felt emotions in order to prioritize and direct thinking. Understanding emotion is the ability to understand relationships among emotions and how emotions transition from one state to another. Regulating, or managing, emotion is the ability to regulate emotion in oneself and others (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). These four branches are arranged in order from more basic psychological processes to more complex psychological processes. For example, the lowest level branch involves the relatively simple task of recognizing and expressing emotion. On the contrary, the highest level branch involves the conscious regulation of emotions to enhance emotional and intellectual growth (Mayer & Salovey, 1997).

Baumrind, (1966) contended that parenting styles have strong effect on children's emotional development. They have been found to influence children's self-control (Baumrind 1966, 1967 & 1995), sociability (Van den Boom, 1994), social competence (Kuczyinski and Kochaska, 1995, Hasan & Power, 2002), peer competence (Gottman, 1997, Pearson & Rao, 2003), depression symptomatology (Lempers, Clark Lempers & Simons, 1989) and coping strategies (Meesters & Muris, 2004). Parenting styles influence so many characteristics of children. Unfortunately, there is dearth of research in this area in Nigeria, especially among students in post primary institutions.

## **1.1 Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of this study is to find out about the different parenting styles and how each style affects the emotional intelligence of children. The other objectives are:

1. To ascertain the relationship between parenting styles and emotional intelligence among adolescents.
2. To ascertain the interactive influence of authoritative, authoritarian and permissive parenting styles on emotional intelligence.
3. To ascertain the influence of age and gender on emotional intelligence.

## **1.2 Research Hypotheses**

**Ho1:** There will be a significant positive relationship between parenting styles and emotional intelligence in adolescents.

**Ho2:** There will be a relative contribution of parenting styles to the level of emotional intelligence in adolescents.

**Ho3:** There will be a significant positive relationship between age, gender and emotional intelligence.

### 1.3 Ethical considerations

According to Cohen and Swerdik (2010), ethics pertain to a body of principles of right, proper or good conduct. They asserted that a respondent that is involved in a research study has the right: to give informed consent; to be informed of the results; the right to privacy and confidentiality; and not to be labelled in a stigmatizing manner. Ethical clearance for the study was obtained via the principal of the selected secondary schools who coordinated with parents and guardians. Consent letters were signed by parents and returned to the researcher through the principal to give consent for their wards to participate in the present study. Assent letters were also signed by learners and returned to the researcher whereby they agreed to voluntarily participate in the study.

## 2 METHODS

Two hundred and fifty (250) senior secondary school students with age ranging from 15 to 19 years (mean age = 17 years) were selected from five Secondary Schools in Lagos State through stratified and systematic sampling techniques. The study being a survey research, made use of a questionnaire consisting of two validated subscales.

### 2.1 Measures

A questionnaire consisting of two validated subscales was used in the study. The Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire –Short Form (Petrides & Furnham, 2006) and the Parenting Style Inventory (Adeusi, 2013).

The Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire -Short Form (TEI-Que-SF) was modeled from the TEI-Que which consisted of 30 items, 2 items from each of the 15 facets of its full form. Items were selected primarily on the basis of their correlations with the corresponding total facet scores, which ensured broad coverage of the sampling domain (Petrides, 2011). This measure is usually used in research with limited time. The scoring of these 30 short items used a 7 – point Likert scale, with 1 being ‘completely Disagree’ and 7 being ‘completely Agree’. For the scoring of the TEI-Que-SF, a global score is obtained by summing up all item responses and dividing by the number of items, which are 30 in number. It should be noted that 15 items in this scale are reversed scored.

The second instrument is the Parenting Style Inventory (PSI). It is a self-report inventory designed and standardized to measure the type of parenting styles practiced by parents depending on their level of warm/responsiveness and control/demandingness. The full version consists of 60 items (30 for father’s parenting style and 30 for mother’s parenting style) the scale is scored on a 4- point Likert scale, with 1= Never, 2= Almost Never, 3= Often and 4= Always. The abridged PSI version consisted of 30 items (15 for father’s parenting style and 15 for mother’s parenting style). The reliability of the abridged PSI version was established using a test-retest reliability method. It was administered to 25 students in Ota, and after a four-week interval, the same instrument was re-administered. The Cronbach’s Alpha was used to calculate the reliability coefficient, which was 0.78. The research trajectory was therefore considered adequate for testing purposes

## 3 RESULTS

**Ho1:** There will be a significant positive relationship between parenting styles and emotional intelligence in adolescents.

Table 1 shows the correlation among the variables used for the study. There was a positive and significant correlation between emotional intelligence and father’s authoritative parenting style ( $r = 0.152, P < 0.005$ ), mother’s authoritative parenting style ( $r = 0.227, P < 0.01$ ), and mother’s authoritarian parenting style ( $r = 0.144, P < 0.005$ ). Therefore, the hypothesis which states that there will be a significant positive relationship between parenting styles and emotional intelligence in adolescents was accepted for father’s authoritative parenting style, permissive style, mother’s authoritative parenting style and authoritarian but rejected for all other parenting style of both parents.

TABLE 1: Correlations between Parenting styles and Emotional Intelligence

Parenting Styles		TEIQ
Total Score on TEIQ	Pearson Sig. (1-tailed) N	1  250
Total Score on Fathers Authoritative Style	Pearson Sig. (1-tailed) N	.152* .010 250
Total Score on Fathers Authoritarian Style	Pearson Sig. (1-tailed) N	.046 .241 250
Total Sore on Fathers Permissive Style	Pearson Sig. (1-tailed) N	.188 .102 250
Total Score on Mothers Authoritative Style	Pearson Sig. (1-tailed) N	.227** .000 250
Total Sore on Mothers Authoritarian Style	Pearson Sig. (1-tailed) N	.144* .014 250
Total Sore on Mothers Permissive Style	Pearson Sig. (1-tailed) N	.061 .175 250

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

**Ho2:** There will be a relative contribution of parenting styles to the level of emotional intelligence in adolescents.

Table 2: Relative Contribution of the Predictors on the Criterion Variable

Predictor Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t-ratio	Sig.
	B	Std Err	Beta		
(Constant)	79.964	14.483		5.521	.000
Total Score on Fathers Authoritative	.536	.746	.055	.719	.473
Total Score on Fathers Authoritarian	-1.111	.824	-.105	-1.349	.179
Total Score on Fathers Permissive Style	2.388	1.347	.132	1.772	.078
Total Score on Mothers Authoritative	1.952	.832	.183	2.345	.020
Total Score on Mothers Authoritarian	1.341	.774	.127	1.731	.085
Total Score on Mothers Permissive Style	-1.195	1.211	-.072	-.987	.325

**a. Predictors:** (constant), Total Score Fathers Authoritative, Total Score on Fathers Authoritarian , Total Score on Fathers Permissive Style, Total Score on Mothers Authoritative, Total Score on Mothers Authoritarian, Total Score on Mothers Permissive Style.

**b. Dependent Variable:** Total Score on TEIQ

Table 3: Contribution of the Predictor on the Criterion Variable and Model Summary of Multiple Regressions<sup>b</sup>

<b>R= .289<sup>a</sup></b> <b>R<sup>2</sup>= .084</b> <b>R<sup>2</sup> Adj= .059</b> <b>Std.Err=37.83846</b>					
Source	SS	Df	MS	F	Sig.
Regression	29578.979	6	4929.830	3.443	.003 <sup>a</sup>
Residual	323575.330	243	1431.749		
Total	353154.309	249			

In testing hypothesis two, regression analysis was carried out on both mother and father's authoritative, authoritarian and permissive style as predictor variables and emotional intelligence as the criterion variable. Table 2 reveals that only mother's authoritative parenting style of all the six variables was a strong predictor of emotional intelligence. ( $\beta = 1.952$ ;  $t = 2.345$ ;  $p = 0.020$ ). The hypothesis which states that there will be a relative contribution of parenting styles to the level of emotional intelligence in adolescents was accepted for mother's authoritative parenting style but rejected for other variables.

The model summary as presented in Tables 2 and 3 reveals that when all the predictor variables were entered into the regression model at once; there was a significant positive relationship between mother's authoritative parenting style and emotional intelligence ( $r = .289a$ ,  $r^2 = .084$ ;  $F(6,226) = 3.443$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ). In this study, 8.4% of the variation in emotional intelligence appears to be accounted for by the parenting styles of both father and mother.

**Ho3:** There will be a significant positive relationship between age, gender and emotional intelligence

Table 4: Correlation between Gender, Age and Emotional Intelligence

		Gender of Participant	Age of Participant	Total Score on TEIQ
Gender of Participant	Pearson Correlation	1	-.177**	.222**
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.003	.000
	N	233	233	233
Age of Participant	Pearson Correlation	-.177**	1	-.027
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.003		.343
	N	233	233	233
Total Score on TEIQ	Pearson Correlation	.222**	-.027	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	.343	
	N	233	233	233

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

Table 4 shows the correlations between gender, age and emotional intelligence. There was a positive and significant correlation between emotional intelligence and gender ( $r = 0.222$ ,  $P < 0.01$ ). But the relationship between emotional intelligence and age is negative and also not significant ( $r = -0.027$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). The hypothesis which states that there is a significant positive relationship between gender and emotional intelligence in adolescents is accepted but the relationship between age and emotional intelligence was rejected.

## 4 DISCUSSION

The hypothesis which states that there will be a significant positive relationship between parenting styles and emotional intelligence in adolescents was accepted for father's authoritative parenting style ( $r = 0.152$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ), mother's authoritative parenting style ( $r = 0.227$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ), and mother's authoritarian parenting style ( $r = 0.144$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ). Children whose parents listen and allow them to contribute to decision making are able to cope adaptively with stress and experience good social interactions. Also, parents who experience more positive effect and who share more that positive affect with their children have children who display greater emotional skills (Kochanska & Murray, 2000). Children of authoritative parents have been found to score better than children of authoritarian, uninvolved, and permissive parents in several measures such as resilience (Kritzas & Grobler, 2005), social and school competence (Lamborn, Mounts, Steinberg, & Dornbusch, 1991), academic achievement (Aremu, Tella & Tella, 2006) and prosocial behaviour (Hastings, McShane, & Parker, 2007).

Hypothesis two was accepted for mother's authoritative parenting style. The hypothesis was rejected for father's authoritarian parenting style and for mother's permissive parenting styles. Past studies show that adolescents whose parents are authoritative rate themselves and are rated by objective measures as more socially and instrumentally competent than those whose parents are non-authoritative (Baumrind, 1991; Weiss & Schwarz, 1996). This result supports the assertion that parental responsiveness predicts social competence and psychosocial functioning. In a study, it was reported that the time mothers spend with their children is a significant influence in their emotional development. Spanish mother's parenting practices had an impact on children's emotional intelligence (Alegra and Benson, 2004). Spanish mothers who spent more time with their children and developed more educational activities had more emotionally intelligent children (Greenspan, 1996 & Kindlon, 2001). Children of authoritative parents have been found to score better than children of authoritarian, uninvolved, and permissive parents in measures of adjustment (Steinberg, Lamborn, Darling, & Mounts, 1994).

Hypothesis three states that "there will be a significant positive relationship between age, gender and emotional intelligence in adolescents" The hypothesis that states that there will be a significant positive correlation between gender and emotional intelligence was accepted but was rejected for age. Age was not positively correlated with emotional intelligence. Probably this result could have been different if a broader range of ages were considered. One such study that took into account a broad range of ages (19 to 84 years old, with a mean age of 50.74 years) found an interesting relationship between emotional intelligence and age (Derksen, Kramer, & Katzko, 2002). Researchers such as Extremera, Fernández-Berrocal & Salovey (2006) & Kafetsios, (2004) examined how age influences the relation between gender and emotional intelligence, since previous research has identified age as one of the socio demographic variables most relevant to the evolution of emotional intelligence, as well as to the evolution of other types of intelligence (Mayer, Caruso & Salovey, 1999). Studies analyzing how Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) changes with age have given contradictory results. Although these results are conflicting, together they indicate the relevance of age for the development and evolution of emotional intelligence not only as a factor associated with emotional intelligence, but also as a potential mediator of the relation between gender and emotional intelligence. As investigators in gender psychology point out, gender as an independent variable functions in complex interactions with third variables like age. Past studies show that as a group, male's demonstrated better adjustment than females, and that there is differences between males and females in the level of emotional intelligence (Derksen, Kramer, & Katzko, 2002; Abdallah, Elias, Mahyuddin & Uli, 2009; Sanchez-Ruiz, Perez-Gonzales, & Petrides, 2010). Researchers also discovered that ages and genders do indicate significant differences between students. A study by Noor-Azniza and Jdaitawi (2009) found that older students have higher emotional intelligence than younger ones and conclusively, Pike, Schroeder, and Berry (1997) claims that student's adjustment according to gender and age differences do exist.

### 4.1 Conclusion

In conclusion, very little research in the field of parenting and emotional intelligence among post-primary school students has been done in Nigeria. This study shows a relationship between emotional intelligence and parenting styles. Like this study, most of the few studies addressing parenting and emotional intelligence are of correlational nature. For future directions, there is a strong need for more experimental or longitudinal studies to properly situate the nexus between parenting styles and emotional intelligence. All of these put together show that being emotionally intelligent adds value to

life. Emotions are important to our everyday lives; hence, young people should be assisted on how to control their emotions. Parents, teachers and significant others need to provide guidance for the development emotional intelligence of these young impressionable students

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