



Awakening Time To Modify Parenting Style “Strict Need of Change”

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Abstract

The family setting we are born into has the biggest impact on our emotional growth. Our early childhood is why in shaping our emotional development despite In reality after that a person experience other life events as time passes. As a child growing up in India, the norm is to have a house shared by one not one but a few generations of elders. So, kids have access to wisdom from a higher number of generations resulting in getting different minds from which they can get advice. These individuals become the first source of care and This way the first opportunity to create the feeling of belonging. When the relationship between children and their caregivers is continuously warm and loving that certain positive qualities should emerge: an individual will be able to understand the feelings of others more easily, be more forgiving, the propensity to realize when one is being helped and ability to depend on safe emotional connections. Such emotional bonds have been proven to be linked to emotional well-being, the ease of making friends and concentrating at school. In contrast, the lack of affection, sending out the wrong signals or putting too much pressure on a child can bring a complete halt in achieving the normal development.

The migration from the countryside to cities, exhausted parents and even family trauma being passed down through generations can act as such agents which will further widen these gaps. The possible results can be a mind that is constantly stirring, a feeling of sadness that has no specific cause, a low sense of value and finding it difficult to form close relationships. Besides looking at the family life in the major cities of India, there was also the witnessing the hardships of early childhood in the rural Bihar, study of which shows that the developmental patterns are general ones. Alongside the theories of moral development (e.g. Kohlberg, Hoffman) there are local ideas like sanskara (moral development) and the gurushishya parampara (continuity through trusted relationships) that have been introduced. These viewpoints not only help to understand how care-giving methods impact the mental states of a person but they also show how such methods contribute to the overall well-being of a person.

INTRODUCTION

Children's first interaction with their parents or caregivers deeply affect their emotional, social, and cognitive development. Besides biological parents in India, the caregivers may also be grandparents, elder siblings, and neighbours because of the traditional joint family system (Sharma & Pandey, 2018). Providing consistent and loving parenthood can be regarded as a "safe harbor" (Bowlby, 1969) for kids, where they can confidently build their

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self-identity, strengthen their self-esteem, and acquire coping skills. Actually, such early relational experiences determine our lifetime patterns that are consistent with developmental trajectories in the West and traditional Indian models such as Abhidharma psychology and the concept of *vasan* (mental impression due to past conditioning) (this review article will result in the points).

Erikson's psychosocial theory suggests that the main conflict of infancy- basic trust vs mistrust is largely resolved through the dependability of the caregiver(s). These initial experiences then become our internal templates for relationships ahead. For instance, maternal attunement leads to a secure attachment, whereas reciprocal harshness predicts the externalising type of personality at school stage, in a longitudinal research, the Mumbai Maternal- Infant Health Study of India (Kumar et al. 2020). Recent research conducted in Indian metros and smaller towns has further proved that when parents are both instrumental and at the same time grant independence, children tend to be satisfied with their lives highly (Lavri & Naterer, 2020) and even less struggle their college transition (Lee et al. 2024). The desire for parental love is a worldwide need; even the communities with a historically strict parenting style, healthy psychosocial development require warmth (Alcaide et al. 2025).

Still, punishing style of parenting - over strict, nonattention to emotional and even physical neglect - still very much present in some Indian contexts (In particular in very poor areas with chaotic life schedules caused by poverty, migration or continuous parental mental illness). One of the factors that make childhood anxiety (Sahithya & Raman, 2020) and depression of college students (Wu et al. 2025) common side effects of bad parenting is that emotional regulation is impaired. Besides that, the children raised in a non-supportive manner will have issues to form inter-individual transactions, social challenge (Abbasi et al. 2024) and could lack academic motivation and self-regulated learning, most Particularly among first-generation students, in the Indian scenario (Isufi & Haskuka, 2024; Fute et al. 2024).

One of the key results of terrible and abusive parenting styles documented by various studies is the generational transmission of poor parenting. Parents' traumatic past, stress, and mental disorders affect their style of parenting that in turn causes the child to be caught up in a very harmful cycle (Vafaeenejad et al. 2019). As for India,

Parenting Styles and Attachment

In their 2013 research, Parker and colleagues found that authoritative parenting remains the best style for raising children regardless of whether the families were Western or Eastern culture. Secure attachment related to authoritative parenting has been found in different cultures including very limited or protected environments. For example, in Indian joint families, there may be two or more caregivers offering different but complementary attachment figures. Later research Sharma and Pandey (2018) discussed the function of grandparents as emotional coaches whereas parents are mainly involved with academic matters. On the flip side, if children are given either vague options or very severe punishment, they should develop insecure attachment styles. Kumar et al. Maternal sensitivity can decrease externalizing behavior whereas harsh punishment results in increased externalizing behavior (Trentacosta 2020). The impact of such factors is Actually so powerful that they can even influence people's behavior long after they have become adults. For example, life satisfaction (Lavri & Naterer, 2020) and college adjustment (Lee et al. 2024) do be tied to this particular feature of childhood experience.

Importance of Forgiveness

Besides the personal gains that forgiving may bring (like improved emotional health), it is also good for our social interactions. In fact, when we teach kids to forgive, we are really teaching them how to handle their emotions, get with others, and grow morally as human beings (Denham et al. 2005). Forgiveness is a social act that one discovers naturally because, by nature, people want to restore their relationships after a fight or an argument (Oostenbroek & Vaish 2019). Even very young children can understand the mending of relations with forgiveness which is not only culturally and emotionally conditioned, but also guided (Ahirwar et al. 2019).

In Indian storytelling tradition, through Panchatantra and Hitopadesha stories as well as the depiction of great characters of Ramayana and Mahabharata, forgiveness has been presented as the way the Indian families live. The presence of *ahimsa* (non-violence) as one of the main tenets of Mahatma Gandhi has led to the reinterpretation of the concept of forgiveness as something beautiful and strong rather than weak. Festivals like Raksha Bandhan and Karva Chauth are gestures of such reconciliation and caring. These celebrations build a favorable attitude

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towards forgiveness. The foundation of the forgiving ability lies in the first simple action such as a four-year-old wanting a clear apology and gradually it is evolving into complicated intellectual processes like five-year-olds comprehending regret even in the absence of an apology (Oostenbroek & Vaish, 2019). Indian teenagers mostly associate themselves with the concept of kshama (forgiveness as a spiritual path). Children get guidance from adults mostly grandparents in Indian joint families to know what is wrong, how one's deeds affect relationships and to regulate one's feelings to induce reconciliation (Ahrwar et al. 2019).

Besides this, forgiveness also leads to better collaboration and trust among peers. A few school programs in India (e.g. the Punah Prashikshan program in Rajasthan) have shown that peer-to-peer forgiveness activities not only reduce bullying but also create more harmony among students in classrooms. In the family sphere, forgiveness brings about one's well-being, relationship changes, and family overall emotional climate (Maio et al. 2008). Still, "asymmetries" do exist: the forgiveness of a parent by a child is different from that between mother and father, a case Mostly relevant for the Indian family which is very hierarchical and where it is uncommon for elders to become apologizing to juniors (Maio et al. 2008). Acknowledging this cultural element is a must when creating culturally appropriate parenting workshops.

Role of gratitude

Gratitude has typically been considered simply a moral emotion, so its possible role as a character trait has hardly been discussed. So, only a few effective and broadly-applicable ways of cultivating gratitude have been worked out (Li, 2016).

Verbal expressions of gratitude in India are the tip of the iceberg since gratitude is also embedded into the life rituals such as pranam (bowing to elders), annadaan (offering food), and runa (debt) which embodies the idea of saying that each one of us has a gratitude balance that) parents teachers, gods, and society being the main entities connected through gratitude. Kritajnata (gratitude) was given the elevation of a major virtue in the ancient Gurukul system. Li's (2016) model is based on Piaget Kohlberg attachment theory, Hoffman's internalisation, Rest's justice orientation, and Baumrind's parenting styles. It well represents the Indian scenario. Different parenting styles have their pros and cons; Yet, the indomitable Indian preference for authoritative parenting (warm yet firm) can be the one that helps in the development of gratitude in the strongest way

against authoritarian and neglectful methods (Mala & Kapoor, 2021). Emerging adult studies (Lin, 2023) found that parental care, Mainly maternal care, positively affects persons' disposition towards gratitude through the influence on individuals' negative and positive orientation (thinking of the past and future). In a survey of 500 college students from Delhi NCR, the students who felt more maternal warmth were more grateful to their teachers and friends, while the perception of paternal care was related to the idea of karma (seed and result action), which gave rise to future-oriented gratitude (Sharma, 2022).

Gratitude is a socioemotional tool that allows one to develop one's character gradually (Danioni & Regalia, 2021). In Indian families, parents most often use the device of daily prarthana (prayer) to get their children into the habit of thanking anna brahma (food as one of the manifestations of God) and telling stories of family with hardships and help and support. Intervention research still points out that without cultural alignment gratitude activities are heroes who only partly achieve their mission (Hussong et al. 2021). As an example, a merit-based gratitude journaling experience with parents in the Mumbai slums (Ahmed, 2016) was originally a linguistic misuse community the participants wrote "three things I received from the chawl community today" instead of the task prompts. Restructured in this way the program expanded positivity and satisfaction with life among the participating parents, even though the change in their behavior was not significant for every principal variable. And, the program lessened parents' tendency to over-identify with negative thoughts, unveiling the possibility that gratitude exercises may aid parents in stress regulation.

Methodologically speaking, research using the measure of thankfulness for children aged 6-9 (Hussong et al. 2019) pointed out that multi-method assessments (lab observations, daily parent reports, follow-ups) are indispensable. And, in India, the recently created and standardized Bharat Gratitude Scale (BGS, 2023) identifies culturally specific gratitude behaviors like dhanyavad with folded hands or giving dakshina.

Significance of trust

Trusting a child isn't only based on instinct; rather it is aligned with the parent's socialization process and the cultural environment (Stolle & Nishikawa, 2011). The falling levels of generalised trust in North America have led parents to caution children not to trust strangers, a warning that has largely been impacted by media as

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well as other fear-mongering. Though, in India trust socialisation is a complex and multilayered process. Children living in villages or small towns may consider their surrounding life as high-trust: neighbors, shopkeepers and the occasional holy men are all perceived as trustworthy. But at the same time, the rise of urbanization, witnessing child abduction cases through media (e.g. the Nithari case) and the increase of nuclear families have pushed urban Indian children towards lesser trust. Nowadays, parents' trust in their teenagers is majorly based on their influence (Kerr et al.1999). Holing up to Indian research, the intensely greatest range of trust is achieved when parents learn their child's world through the child's voluntary disclosure rather than secret surveillance. It is a very traditional thing of khuli baat us (open conversation) which the family does during meals or tea time.

A research done on 800 adolescents in Lucknow (Tiwari & Singh, 2021) reported the kids who told their parents about their day on their own accord not only received more trust from them but were also less involved in delinquency. However, when the parents feature high surveillance (e.g. checking phones, restricting outings), the youngsters become more secretive and quite often, there is a drop in trust. In line with the studies of Rotenberg (1995), trust socialisation in middle childhood, pointed out the mother's promise-keeping as a major for children's developing trust in mothers, fathers and teachers. In Indian joint families, the paternal grandmother (dadi) is frequently the "trusted third party": a child experiencing her ability to keep her word is more likely to trust other extended family members as well. A father's cooperative behaviour (e.g. playing cricket together, meeting commitments) motivates the children to follow their example even among strangers. This is In particular significant for Indian fathers who, thanks to paternity leave policies and urban parenting groups, are progressively playing a greater role in childcare. Further evidence (Kostromina et al. 2016) indicates that children associate trust with collaboration, open communication, and absence of negative treatment. In India, children tend to view their dads as more well-organised but emotionally detached, while mothers are seen as kind but worried. When a mother is perceived to be very dominating - which is something happening quite frequently in the high-pressure Indian metros with highly competitive schooling - children usually opt for avoidance or passive coping strategies. Same thing, a father who resorts to teasing

or sarcasm (usually quite normalised as "light-hearted") might cause a complete loss of trust.

Coping effectively will happen only if parents are not just there (physically) but also in an ongoing way involved in family duties. That is why the tradition of regular khaandaan baithak (family gatherings) which is considered the most prestigious is really great. A set of these researches with Indian data reveals that parents' actions, communication styles, and emotional responses play a role in the development of trust from early childhood to adolescence. In India, trust is not only confined within family but also extended to teachers, elders (bade-buzurg), and community institutions. Initiatives that improve trust between parents and children likely produce very beneficial effects throughout the entire social environment.

CONCLUSION

This review has synthesised evidence from both Western attachment theory and Indian cultural frameworks to demonstrate that parenting styles profoundly shape emotional growth through mechanisms of attachment, forgiveness, gratitude, and trust. Authoritative parenting—warm yet firm—emerges as consistently beneficial, while harsh, neglectful, or overly controlling practices confer long- term risks. The joint family system, with its multiple caregivers and traditional practices (e.g., storytelling, rituals of reconciliation, daily gratitude expressions), offers unique protective factors. However, urbanisation, mediadriven fear, and intergenerational trauma present new challenges. Culturally adapted interventions that promote forgiveness, gratitude, and trust—rather than directive control—are likely to improve child wellbeing across Indian contexts. Future research should further validate culturally specific measures (e.g., the Bharat Gratitude Scale) and test scalable, family based programmes in both rural and urban settings.

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