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The Impact of Parental Involvement In Attachment Style And Financial Self- Efficacy In Young Adults

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Abstract: This study explores the influence of perceived parental involvement on attachment styles and financial self-efficacy among young adults aged 18–25. A cross-sectional survey design was employed with a sample of 105 college students from the Delhi NCR region. Data were collected using the Parental Bonding Instrument, Adult Attachment Style Scale, and the BCFP Financial Well-Being Scale**.** Chi-square tests revealed significant associations between both father and mother involvement types and participants' attachment styles. One-way ANOVA results further indicated that parental involvement significantly predicted levels of financial self-efficacy, with paternal involvement showing a stronger effect. Participants who perceived their parents—especially fathers—as supportive and autonomy-granting were more likely to report secure attachment and higher financial self-efficacy. These findings emphasize the critical role of early parenting in fostering both emotional stability and financial competence, offering important implications for educational institutions, counsellors, and future longitudinal research.

Keywords: *Parental Involvement, Attachment Styles, Financial Self-Efficacy, Young Adults, Emotional Development, Financial Competence*

1. Introduction

1.1 *Importance of parental involvement*

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Parental involvement is often regarded as crucial factor creating foundation for both emotional and cognitive development. Parental behaviour its quality and consistency influence how children perceive their surroundings around them. Positive parental involvement like responsiveness, nurture environment and engaged parenting fosters secure emotional bonds, improves trust and cultivates sense of security. In contrast neglectful parenting or over controlling parents can cause dysfunctional behaviour, lowered self-esteem and formation of insecure attachment styles. According to Bronfenbrenner's theory parents are the first socializing agents in a child's life and through daily communications like guiding, comforting and setting boundaries they build cognitive abilities, emotional regulation are built. These experiences are quite critical because they set a path for intrapersonal as well as interpersonal relationships and how to navigate in complex social situations.

Individual with this kind of attachment views themselves as worthy of a loving relationship and will easily rely and trust their partners. Anxious attachment is often rooted in inconsistent caregiving when a caregiver is alternatively neglectful and responsive. Those with anxious type have high fear of abandonment and is emotionally sensitive mixed with fervent desire for closeness.

Avoidant attachment often tends to develops when caregivers are emotionally unavailable, rejecting. Individuals with avoidant type may become emotionally self-reliant and often de-emphasize the importance of close relationships.

These attachment styles remain stable over time and influence emotional regulation and interpersonal relationships, self-concept and over all psychological adjustment into adulthood.

1.2 ***Attachment Theory***

John Bowlby's attachment theory lays groundwork in developmental and child psychology. It explains how early experiences with caregivers can mold a person's emotional and social, behavioural development throughout life. According to the author of this theory humans are biologically predisposed to from interpersonal relationships as act to survive. Infants rely on caregivers to provide them with protection, safety, security. Through this to and for interactions they develop inner working models which is mental representation of their own selves and others in a relationship that guide their future behaviour. Bowlby mentioned that words concepts like sensitivity, regularity and responsiveness of caregivers are important in forming of these attachment style. Insensitive parenting inculcates feelings of insecurity in individuals

Bowlby categorizes attachment styles into secure and insecure attachment styles. Consistent care, emotional responsiveness leads to secure attachment which then links to how trusting an individual would be. Insecure attachment on other hand arises from emotional distancing or rejecting caregiver's advances, leading children to minimize expressions of emotional need and favour self -reliance over intimacy. These attachment styles leave a long lasting impressions into adulthood influencing relationship patterns and emotional regulations, emotional regulations and self- concept, self-worth and ability to manage financial situations and decision making. The attachment style given by Bowlby is often said to be the bedrock of other concepts related to self.

1.3 *Importance of financial self-efficacy and confidence in young adults*

The term financial self-efficacy refers to individual's belief in their ability to manage effectively tasks like budgeting, managing, making conscious financial decisions. Financial self-efficacy becomes particularly important as individuals transition into independent lives, often managing their financial responsibilities by themselves like paying students loans, rent and managing their savings. Confidence in one's decision influences psychological aspects.

Given that early adulthood decides for life long monetary habits developing strong financial self-efficacy is critical for overall mental health and emotional stability.

Developing financial self-efficacy is not an isolating process rather it's cause is deeply inserted in early life experiences especially influence of parental modelling and involvement. Parent's influence of parental modelling and involvement. Financial socialization in households always impact children whether directly or indirectly through modelling or observation learning.

1.4 *Why study attachment style and financial self-efficacy together*

The psychological process that underpins self-concept, coping strategies and perceived competence make attachment style and financial self-efficacy strongly related even though they are often studied separately. According to attachment theory a person's early connection experiences shape how they oversee stress, independence, and challenges as an adult. People are more confident in their ability to manage life's issues including financial obligations when they are closely related and absorb positive role models for both them and others. They are more likely to ask for assistance when needed employ initiative-taking strategies and make confident autonomous decisions including monetary ones.

2. Review of Literature

Li et al. (2020) studied through the use of Vulnerability- stress- adaptation model, suggested that people with anxious type attachment was associated with low financial satisfaction and low life satisfaction because of young adult's own irresponsible financial behaviours. Also, according to this research anxious and avoidant type attachment has led to low relationship satisfaction in accordance with perceived partner's financial behaviour. Anxious and avoidant type attachment can lead to financial troubles, as well as cause financial dependency on one's partner. One of the implications of this research is attachment styles that can be taken into consideration while measuring or observing financial behaviour of adults. Financial behaviour can be taken as a measure of relationship wellbeing.

Thomas, et al. (2020) studied role pf parental engagement and students experience with money; through collecting data in fifteen OECD countries. In the research it was pointed out that role of parents that is discussing money matters and allowing them to learn the value of saving or simply holding or controlling their own bank accounts can lead to improve students' financial behaviour. Highlighting the role of parents towards child's own financial knowledge and skill, it's mentioned that parental involvement and increase awareness of how to handle money matters.

Thomas, et al. (2020) has revealed that one of the factors influencing financial literacy among students is "family influence" that positively affects financial literacy and dependency. Small habits inculcated by parents like giving pocket money, discussion on money matters or in some cases younger siblings are also influenced by their elder siblings in financial matters. Here, the focus is intended on indirect family communications. In this paper, Social Learning Theory has highlighted the role family and peers play in level of financial literacy in an individual's life, showing how an individual observes how their parents manage money and would imitate that behaviour in their own lives. The results of the paper have inferred that most of the students (engineering) lack financial literacy because of many influences like parental, fail to provide proper education and knowledge. the author has stated that family influence is positively related and predicts financial literacy.

Oktafian. (2022) research underscore's significant role that family plays in determining the financial literacy of young people. It was seen that mothers of the individual who were educated and had a college degree were easily able to understand basic terms like inflation. With the same pattern, parents who held investments like stocks or savings had fine understanding of complex financial terms and concepts. This was directed towards the fact that financial knowledge or in general any knowledge is passed down to children, although not always through direct instructions, along with observations and shared experiences within household. According to study an individual whose parents owned stocks and had savings are fifty- percent more likely to grasp complicated financial ideologies and concepts. This statement from the literature also points out to disparity on access of financial knowledge.

Author has mentioned that parents who are better educated- financially are in a better position to equip their children about financial matters as well. At the end it's regarded to education to break the cycle of limited financial knowledge.

3. Methodology

3.1 *Aim Of The Study*

The primary aim of the study is to investigate impact of perceived parental involvement on attachment styles and financial self-efficacy of young adults

3.2 *Hypothesis*

H1: There will be significant association between the type of parental involvement (for both mother and father) and the attachment style (secure, anxious, avoidant) developed in young adults.

H2: The type of parental involvement (for both mother and father) will significantly predict the level of financial self-efficacy in young adults.

3.3 *Research Design*

This study employed a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design to evaluate the impact of parental involvement on young people's attachment patterns and financial self-efficacy. The survey method was chosen to enable the collection of a large volume of data in a short amount of time while also permitting statistical analysis of variable correlations.

3.4 *Sampling Design*

The sample design consists of 105 college -going students (50 males, 50 females). The age range of the participants was between 18 to 25 years old. The study was conducted in the Delhi NCR region using convenience sampling method from various colleges within the region.

Inclusion criteria

- **a.** The participants ranged in age from 18 to 25 years old.
- **b.** The research included both men and women.
- **c.** The study included people mostly from the Delhi and NCR regions.

Exclusion criteria

- **a.** The study did not include anyone under the age of 13 or more than 19 years old.
- **b.** Population with severe mental illness were excluded from the study.
- **c.** Individuals from other cities were excluded from the study

3.5 *Variables*

Independent Variable: Parental Involvement

Dependent Variable: Attachment style, Financial Self-efficacy

3.6 ***Description Of Test***

Parental Bonding Instrument: Parker, Tupling, and Brown (1979) created the Parental Bonding Instrument (PBI), a widely used self-report measure that assesses people's opinions of their parents' behaviours throughout their first 16 years of life. The PBI assesses two fundamental aspects of parenting: care (warmth, compassion, empathy) and overprotection/control (intrusiveness, excessive control). In this study, participants were classified into four categories of perceived parental participation based on their replies.

- Affectionate Constraint (high care, high protection)
- Affectionless Control (low care, high protection)
- Neglectful Parenting (low care, low protection)
- Optimal Parenting (high care, low protection)

Adult Attachment Style: The Adult Attachment Style Scale employed in this study is a simplified self-report categorisation based on the theoretical framework created by Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991).

BCFP Financial Well-Being Scale (Short Version):The BCFP Financial Well-Being Scale (Short Version) is a standardised instrument used to examine people's assessments of their financial condition and capabilities. In this study, the scale was used to assess financial self-efficacy by focussing on participants' attitudes about their capacity to manage their money, deal with unexpected costs, and attain financial objectives.

3.7 ***Procedure***

Data were collected using an online questionnaire. Participants provided informed consent electronically before accessing the survey. The questionnaire was separated into four sections: demographics, parental engagement views, attachment type self-assessment, and financial self-efficacy components. Participation was entirely optional, with anonymity and confidentiality guaranteed. The survey was expected to take 10-15 minutes to complete.

3.8 ***Data Analysis***

The collected data were analysed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) software.

- **Descriptive Statistics** were computed to summarize participant demographics and variable distributions.
- **One-Way ANOVA** tests were conducted to examine whether types of parental involvement (both father and mother) significantly predicted differences in financial self-efficacy scores.

- **Post-Hoc Tests** (Games-Howell) were used to identify specific group differences where ANOVA results were significant.
- **Chi-Square Tests of Independence** were performed to assess the relationship between parental involvement styles and attachment styles.
- **Effect Sizes** (Eta-squared, Omega-squared) were reported to determine the practical significance of the findings.
- A significance level of **$p < .05$** was set for all inferential statistical tests.

4. Results

Father involvement and attachment style -chi-square was applied

Table 4.1 (a)

Father Involvement type	Anxious	Avoidant	Secure	Total
Affectionate constraint	9	3	24	36
Affectionless control	18	6	12	36
Neglectful Parenting	0	6	3	9
Optimal Parenting	0	9	15	24
TOTAL	27	24	54	105

Table 4.1 (b)

Test	Value	df	p-value
Pearson chi-square	35.55	6	<.001
Likelihood Ratio	40.64	6	<.001

Chi-square tests of independence revealed significant associations between parental involvement styles and attachment styles for both father and mother figures.

Mother involvement and attachment style

Table 4.2 (a)

Mother Involvement type	Anxious	Avoidant	Secure	Total
Affectionate constraint	9	9	15	33
Affectionless control	12	6	9	36
Optimal Parenting	6	9	30	24
TOTAL	27	24	54	105

Table 4.2 (b)

Test	Value	df	p-value
Pearson chi-square	10.82	4	.029
Likelihood Ratio	10.82	4	.029

For mother involvement, a significant relationship was also observed, $\chi^2(4, N = 105) = 10.82$, $p = .029$.

Participants who perceived their parents (both mother and father) as practicing **optimal parenting** were more likely to develop **secure attachment styles**, whereas those who reported **affectionless control** or **neglectful parenting** tended to develop **anxious** or **avoidant** attachment patterns.

Father Involvement And Financial Self Efficacy

Table 4.3(a)

Source	Sum Of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4362.14	3	1454.05	22.45	<.001
Within Groups	6540.38	101	64.76		
Total	10902.51	104			

A significant difference was found between groups categorized by father and involvement type (p<.001)

Post hoc comparisons (games Howell) test for father involvement

Table 4.3 (b)

Group comparisons	Mean difference	Sig	95% CI lower	95% CI upper
Affectionate constraint vs. Affectionless control	9.75	<.001	4.13	15.37
Affectionate constraint vs. Neglectful parenting	7.33	.006	1.71	12.95
Affectionate constraint vs. Optimal parenting	-6.71	.001	-12.24	-1.18
Affectionless control vs. neglectful parenting	-2.42	.493	-7.04	2.21
Affectional control vs. optimal parenting	-16.46	<.001	-20.92	-12.00

Neglectful parenting vs. optimal parenting	-14.04	<.001	-18.58	-9.50

Mother Involvement And Financial Self Efficacy

Table 4.4 (a)

Source	Sum Of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1143.17	2	571.58	5.97	.004
Within Groups	9759.35	102	95.68		
Total	10902.51	104			

For **mother involvement**, a significant effect was also found, $F(2, 102) = 5.97$, $p = .004$.

Table 4.4 (b)

Group comparisons	Mean difference	Sig	95% CI lower	95% CI upper
Affectionate constraint vs. Affectionless control	8.06	0.12	1.55	14.57
Affectionate constraint vs. Optimal parenting	0.99	.898	-4.41	6.40
Affectional control vs. optimal parenting	-7.07	.013	-12.86	-1.27

5. Discussion of Results

Father Involvement: The chi-square analysis revealed a strong, statistically significant association between father involvement and attachment styles ($\chi^2(6, N = 105) = 35.55$, $p < .001$).Affectionate Constraint: The majority of participants (24 out of 36) developed a secure attachment, consistent with Bowlby's theory that warmth, consistency, and emotional availability contribute to secure attachment. Affectionless Control: A large proportion (18 out of 36) had anxious attachment, likely due to inconsistent emotional signals and excessive control, which mirrors literature associating such styles with heightened insecurity and clinginess. Neglectful Parenting: This was primarily linked to avoidant attachment (6 out of 9), as expected; children in emotionally barren environments often learn self-reliance and develop distrust. Optimal Parenting also yielded high secure attachment levels (15 out of 24), reinforcing the importance of balancing care and autonomy.

Mother Involvement

A parallel analysis also found a significant relationship between maternal parenting and attachment ($\chi^2(4, N = 105) = 10.82, p = .029$). Optimal Parenting by mothers had the highest association with secure attachment (30 out of 54). However, affectionate constraint was more evenly split across attachment styles, indicating that overprotection from mothers may sometimes create ambivalent dynamics, especially in collectivist cultures where maternal roles are emotionally saturated. These results reinforce gendered parenting theories, suggesting maternal involvement tends to impact emotional intimacy and empathy, while paternal influence may shape independence and boundary-setting.

Parental Involvement and Financial Self-Efficacy

Father Involvement

A one-way ANOVA showed that fathering style significantly predicted financial self-efficacy ($F(3, 101) = 22.45, p < .001$), with a large effect size ($\eta^2 = 0.400$) Participants with Optimal Parenting scored the highest in financial self-efficacy.

Those from Affectionless Control or Neglectful backgrounds showed the lowest scores. Post-hoc tests further validated that significant mean differences exist across nearly all comparisons. This aligns with findings from Chatterjee et al. (2024) and Rudi et al. (2020) which indicate that financial modelling and autonomy-granting from parents—especially fathers—are crucial in shaping confidence around money management. The results are especially significant in cultures where fathers play a dominant role in household financial decision-making.

Mother Involvement

Mothering style also showed a statistically significant effect ($F(2, 102) = 5.97, p = .004$), but with a smaller effect size ($\eta^2 = 0.105$). Again, affectionless control was associated with the lowest financial self-efficacy. However, no significant difference was found between affectionate constraint and optimal parenting, suggesting maternal emotional warmth alone is not a strong predictor of financial confidence unless paired with financial autonomy and modelling. This supports Noh et al. (2022) and Fan et al. (2022) who found explicit financial communication and modelling from both parents, particularly in adolescence, is essential for financial behaviour development.

Intersection Between Attachment and Financial Self-Efficacy

The study supports the proposition that attachment patterns mediate the relationship between parenting and financial self-efficacy.

Securely attached individuals tend to exhibit higher financial self-efficacy, consistent with Bandura's self-efficacy theory, which suggests that early emotional security boosts confidence in new, challenging domains like financial independence. Insecurely attached individuals (especially anxious) may avoid financial risk or overcompensate, resulting in poor financial habits—a pattern supported by Li et al. (2020) and Pak et al. (2024).

6. Conclusion

This study stresses the significance of parental involvement in shaping both emotional attachment patterns and financial self-efficacy in young adults. The study found that supportive, loving, and autonomy-promoting parenting strategies are related with secure emotional connections and better financial self-confidence, whereas controlling or negligent parenting techniques are associated with insecure attachments and lower financial self-efficacy. This study provides a more thorough understanding of how early parental impacts influence young adult functioning by examining both emotional and practical developmental outcomes.

For Future Research

The current study underlines the need for more research into the long-term effects of parental involvement at various stages of life. Future research might include longitudinal designs to track attachment styles, financial self-efficacy, and overall life outcomes from childhood to maturity. Such study would provide greater knowledge about how early parental practices affect long-term outcomes, as well as how developmental trajectories might change in response to altering family dynamics, educational experiences, or therapeutic interventions. Furthermore, future research should investigate the moderating effects of socioeconomic status, cultural variations, family configurations (e.g., single-parent or mixed families), and peer influences on the relationship between parental participation and financial or emotional results.

Limitations of the study:

Sample Bias: Using a convenience sample technique decreases the findings' generalisability to a wider population

Self-Report Bias: Data were collected via self-report questionnaires, which might be influenced by participants' memory biases or social desirability.

Cross-Sectional Design: Because the study is cross-sectional, causal inferences cannot be reached; it identifies links rather than causes.

Limited Diversity: The sample may not fully reflect diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, cultural differences, or family structures (for example, single-parent households).

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