

Impact of AI Companionship and Perceived Parenting Approaches on Emotional Intelligence, Emotional Regulation, and Loneliness, Comparing Hostel Students and Day Scholars

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ABSTRACT

AI companionship has become an alternative socio-emotional interaction source for young adults, while parenting approaches remain a primary foundation for emotional socialisation. Emotional intelligence, emotional regulation, and loneliness are critical variables shaped by both digital and family-based relational experiences. The present study aims to examine the impact of AI companionship and perceived parenting approaches on emotional intelligence, emotional regulation, and loneliness, comparing hostel students and day scholars.

A total of 100 undergraduate students will be selected through random sampling. The study will employ a comparative quantitative survey design. Standardised short-form validated instruments will be used: the UCLA Loneliness Scale (Version 3), Parenting Styles and Dimensions Questionnaire (PSDQ), Brief Emotional Intelligence Scale – BEIS-10, and Emotion Regulation Questionnaire – ERQ-10. Patterns of AI companionship exposure will also be recorded for an 8-week observation window to capture the intensity of digital relational engagement.

Data will be analysed using descriptive statistics, correlation, and group-wise comparison tests. It is hypothesised that supportive parenting will relate to higher emotional intelligence and better regulation, and that hostel students may demonstrate higher AI reliance and greater loneliness than day scholars.

SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

The systematic review shows that the exploration by Erim Çil, A. Kerler, M. Akpınar, and Noora Rahmani(2024) explains how anxiety, loneliness, and emotional intelligence are closely connected and powerfully affect how undergraduate students manage emotion. Their study highlights that anxiety — described by Tobias as a constant feeling of solicitude, fear, and physical pressure — generally becomes worse in university settings due to academic stress, social pressure, and major life changes. Çilet et al.(2024) explain that high levels of anxiety frequently lead to loneliness because anxious students may struggle to exchange or maintain friendships or interact confidently, which causes them to withdraw socially and feel isolated. These results support Tobias's idea that anxiety makes it harder for people to understand their emotions and connect with others, increasing the chances of feeling lonely.

At the same time, the experimenters emphasize that emotional intelligence plays a powerful defensive role. Scholars with advanced emotional intelligence — meaning they can understand, manage, and express their feelings well — tend to cope better with stress, communicate more effectively, and maintain healthier connections. They're also better at reading social cues, solving interpersonal problems, and seeking support when needed, which helps break the negative cycle of anxiety leading to loneliness. The study argues that emotional intelligence works in two ways: it reduces how powerfully anxiety leads to loneliness, and it strengthens adaptability, tone, mindfulness, and emotional balance.

Bringing together the ideas of Çil, Kerler, Akpınar, Rahmani, and Tobias, the review shows a clear pattern that anxiety and loneliness frequently fuel each other, but emotional intelligence helps break this cycle and stabilize scholars' well-being. Overall, the substantiation suggests that universities should focus on emotional- regulation training, comforting, and prevent mental-health programs to help scholars make stronger emotional capacities and support their long- term mental health.

INTRODUCTION

The rapid growth of artificial intelligence (AI) has changed how youths interact, communicate, and seek emotional support. AI- grounded chatbots, virtual companions, and conversational agents are increasingly used not only for information but also for emotional expression and fellowship. For university scholars, who frequently face academic pressure, social adaptation issues, and emotional stress, an AI fellowship may serve as an volition or supplementary source of socio-emotional commerce.

At the same time, parenthood approaches continue to play a abecedarian part in emotional development. Parenthood styles impact how individualities understand feelings, regulate emotional responses, and form interpersonal connections. Emotional intelligence, emotional regulation, and loneliness are important cerebral factors that shape scholars' internal health and overall well- being.

Living arrangements may further impact these variables. Hostel scholars, who live down from family, may witness reduced maternal contact and increased reliance on peers or digital support systems. In discrepancy, day scholars continue to live with their families and may admit harmonious emotional and maternal support. This study aims to understand how AI fellowship and perceived parenthood approaches together impact emotional intelligence, emotional regulation, and loneliness among hotel scholars and day scholars.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to recognise, understand, and manage one's own emotions as well as the feelings of others. Emotional regulation involves the strategies individuals use to handle emotional experiences effectively. Loneliness is a personal feeling of emotional or social isolation and isn't inescapably related to physical solitude.

Former exploration highlights that probative and responsive parenthood styles are associated with better emotional intelligence and healthier emotional regulation. Again, an unsupportive or inconsistent parenting style may increase emotional difficulties and feelings of loneliness. Studies also suggest that university students are particularly vulnerable to emotional challenges due to academic stress, social prospects, and experimental transitions.

Recent literature has begun exploring AI fellowship as a new form of emotional engagement. While AI tools may help reduce immediate feelings of isolation, inordinate dependence on digital fellowship may limit daily life social relations. Research comparing hotel scholars and day scholars indicates differences

in emotional adaptation, social support, and managing strategies. Still, few studies have examined these factors together, particularly within the Indian environment.

Internal Criteria

- Undergraduate students aged 18–25 years
- Students currently residing in hostels or living at home as day scholars
- Students who use AI-based applications or digital assistants
- Willingness to participate and provide informed consent

External Criteria

- Students with diagnosed severe psychiatric or neurological disorders
- Students currently undergoing intensive psychological treatment
- Students who do not use AI-based digital platforms at all
- Incomplete or inconsistent responses in questionnaires

Research Gap

Numerous studies have already shown that parenting styles affect a person's feelings, emotional intelligence, and feelings of loneliness. Some recent studies have also begun to study how AI tools and virtual companions affect emotional well-being. Still, these two areas are substantially studied independently. Numerous studies have examined how parenthood and AI fellowship together affect scholars' emotional life. Also, there's truly little exploration comparing hotel scholars and day scholars, indeed, though their diurnal emotional support systems differ significantly. Hostel scholars stay away from family and may depend more on AI or digital fellowship, but this difference isn't easily studied. utmost exploration also examines technology use at only one point in time, rather than observing how scholars actually use AI over time. Because of this, we still don't easily understand how an AI fellowship, along with parenthood, influences emotional intelligence, emotional regulation, and loneliness — especially among undergraduate scholars. This study aims to fill this gap by bringing these factors together and comparing hotel scholars and day scholars in daily life.

Methodology

The study will use a relative quantitative research design. A total number of 100 undergraduate scholars will be selected using an arbitrary slice, including both hotel scholars and day scholars.

Standardised, validated short-form tools will be used for data collection

- UCLA Loneliness Scale (Version 3) to assess loneliness
- Parenthood Styles and confines Questionnaire (PSDQ) to assess perceived parenthood approaches
- detail Emotional Intelligence Scale (BEIS- 10) to measure emotional intelligence
- Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ- 10) to assess emotional regulation strategies

Also, AI companionship patterns will be recorded over an 8- week observation period to understand the intensity and frequency of digital fellowship. Data will be analysed using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and group comparison tests.

Aim of the Study

To examine the impact of AI companionship and perceived parenthood approaches on emotional intellig-

ence, emotional regulation, and loneliness among undergraduate hostel students and day scholars.

Objectives of the Study

1. To assess situations of emotional intelligence, emotional regulation, and loneliness among undergraduate students.
2. To examine the relationship between perceived parenthood approaches and emotional intelligence and emotional regulation.
3. To study patterns of AI companionship research among hostel students and day scholars.
4. To compare hostel students and day scholars on AI companionship reliance and loneliness.
5. To identify associations between AI companionship, emotional intelligence, emotional regulation, and loneliness.

Null Hypothesis (H₀)

1. There's no significant relationship between perceived parenthood approaches and emotional intelligence among undergraduate students.
2. There's no significant relationship between perceived parenthood approaches and emotional regulation among undergraduate scholars.
3. There's no significant relationship between AI fellowship operation and loneliness among undergraduate students.
4. There's no significant difference between hostel students and day scholars in terms of AI companion research.
5. There's no significant difference between hostel scholars and day scholars in situations of loneliness, emotional intelligence, or emotional regulation.

Alternative Hypothesis (H₁)

1. There's a significant relationship between perceived parenthood approaches and emotional intelligence among undergraduate scholars.
2. There's a significant relationship between perceived parenthood approaches and emotional regulation among undergraduate scholars.
3. There's a significant relationship between AI companion research and loneliness among undergraduate students.
4. There's a significant difference between hostel students and day scholars in terms of AI companion research.
5. There's a significant difference between hostel students and day scholars in situations of loneliness, emotional intelligence, and emotional regulation.

Discussion

The findings of this study are anticipated to punctuate the concerted influence of parenthood approaches and AI fellowship on scholars' emotional functioning. Probative parenthood is likely to contribute to better emotional intelligence and healthier emotion regulation strategies. Hostel scholars may focus more on an AI companionship due to reduced family commerce, which could increase emotional comfort but also heighten loneliness if it replaces mortal connections. Day scholars with continued family support may

show lower loneliness and healthier emotional issues. These results may reflect the complex commerce between traditional emotional socialisation and ultramodern digital connections.

Conclusion

This study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how AI companionship and parenting approaches together influence emotional intelligence, emotional regulation, and loneliness among undergraduate students. By comparing hostel students and day scholars, the research highlights the role of living environment in shaping emotional experiences. The findings may contribute to emerging literature on digital companionship and emotional development in young adults.

Implications of the Study

- Helps psychologists and educators understand the emotional impact of AI companionship on students
- Informs parents about the long-term influence of parenting styles on emotional development
- Supports mental health professionals in designing interventions for loneliness and emotional regulation
- Provides a foundation for future research on technology-based emotional support systems
- Offers insights for hostel and college authorities to improve student emotional well-being programs

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