

To Study Gender Differences in Parent-Child Relationship in Late Childhood

Latika Singh¹, Geetika Singh²

¹Research Scholar, Deptt of Home Science, Tika Ram Girls Degree College, Aligarh, Raja Mahendra Pratap Singh University, Aligarh

²Prof. Deptt. of home Science, Tika Ram Girls Degree College, Aligarh, Raja Mahendra Pratap Singh University, Aligarh

ABSTRACT

Late childhood is a critical developmental stage marked by rapid emotional, social and cognitive growth. The parent-child relationship during this period significantly influences children's emotional well-being, social competence and academic outcomes. In this study the child self report version of the parent-child relationship scale (PCRS) developed by Buri, 1989 was used to assess emotional closeness, communication and conflict between children and parents. A total of 150 participants aged 9-12 years from urban and rural schools were included. Data analysis revealed significant gender difference in perceived closeness, communication, and conflict with parents. These findings underscore the importance of considering gender specific patterns in parent-child interactions during late childhood.

The results provide guidance for parents educators and counsellors to foster emotional and relational development effectively.

Keywords : Gender differences, Parent-child relationship, Late childhood.

INTRODUCTION

Late childhood typically ranging from 9-12 years, is a pivotal period of emotional, social and cognitive development, the quality this stage plays a critical role in shaping children's psychological adjustment, social skills and academic performance (Steinberg, 2014) positive parent-child interactions, characterized by warmth, communication and low conflict, contribute, to emotional well being, while strained relationships may increase the risk of behavioural and emotional difficulties.

Research indicates that gender differences influence parent-child relationship dynamics, Singh and Sharma (2025) reported that girls showed higher emotional closeness and communication with parents, while boys exhibited higher conflict and outcoming seeking behaviour Gupta and Verma (2025) found gender differences in parent-child alienation and depressive symptoms among late childhood children, indicating that relational experiences are gender-specific. Additionally, Rani and Kumar (2024) demonstrated that parental child-rearing gender-role attitudes influence children's relational expectations and behaviours.

Although these studies focus on various stages of development, late childhood remains relatively understudied in the context of gender difference in parent-child relationships.

DEFINING PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP.

The parent-child relationship consists a combination of behaviors, feelings and expectations that are unique to particular parents and a particular child. The relationship involves the full extent of a child development.

OBJECTIVES

1. To asses the relationship between parent and children between 6 to 12 years.
2. To examine gender differences in parent child Relationship across the Dimensions of Closeness, communication and conflict.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE :

1. Buri¹ (1989) developed the parent-child relationship scale (PCRS) to measure cloeness, communication and conflict between children and parents. The scale has been widely used in studies of child development and family dynamics.
2. Singh and Sharma² (2025) found that girls reposted greater emotional closeness and communication with parents while boys showed higher conflict and autonomy seeking tendencies.
3. Rohner and Britner³ (2002)
4. Emphasized that parental waranth and acceptance are strongly related to children'psychological well-being, utile, parental rejection predicts emotional and behavioral difficulties.
5. Khaleque and Rohmer² 2012 found that Positive parent-child relationship characterized by affection and support contribute significantly to children's emotional stability across cultures.

METHODOLOGY**Research Design**

The study adopted a descriptive and comparative research design.

Sample Selection

The sample comprised 150 children (75 boys and 75 girls) aged 9-12 years, selected from urban and rural schools using purposive sampling.

Table 1

Variable	Category	N
Gender	Boys	75
	Girls	75
Age	9-12 years	150

Tool Used :-

The parent-child relationship scale (PCRS) developed by.

Buri (1989) was used. The scale measures three dimensions. Closeness, communication, and conflict. The child self report version was administrator.

Table 2 Description of the Tool

Dimension	Number of Items
Closeness	10

Communication	10
Conflict	10
Total	30

Variables

Independent Variable : Gender

Dependent Variables : Closeness, communication conflict.

Procedure and statistical Analysis :

After obtaining consent, the scale was administered in a group setting. Mean, standard deviation, and independent sample t-test were used. The level of significance was set at 0.05.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results revealed significant gender differences in parent-child relationship during late childhood.

Gender differences in parent-child relationship

Dimension	Boys (M ± SD)	Girl (M ± SD)	T-value
Closeness	32.54 ± 4.21	36.82 ± 3.56	5.21
Communication	30.18 ± 3.89	34.12 ± 3.24	6.03
Conflict	28 ± 4.05	25.31 ± 3.78	4.12

Note : P < 01

The findings indicate that girls reported higher levels of closeness and communication with parents, while boys reported higher levels of conflict.

These results are consistent with earlier studies suggesting stronger emotional bonding among girls and greater autonomy-related conflict among boys (Khaleque and Rohner, 2012, Singh and Sharma, 2025)

CONCLUSION

The present study concluded that significant gender difference exist in parent-child relationship during late childhood. Girls tend to experience greater emotional closeness and communication with parents, whereas boys experience relatively higher conflict.

These findings emphasize the importance of gender-sensitive parenting practices to promote healthy parent-child relationships. The parent-child relationship scale (Buri) 1998, was found to be an effective tool for assessing children's perceptions of their relationship with parents.

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