

Trait Emotional Intelligence, Perceived Parenting Style and Birth Order in Young Adults

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Parenting style along with birth order constitutes important factors of a child's environment in the family, thus having a great potential to contribute to his/her emotional development. This study specifically focus to discern the entanglement between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Perceived Parenting Styles (PPS), while investigating differences in trait EI across birth orders among individuals aged 18 to 25 years. Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire-Short Form (TEIQue-SF) was employed for measuring EI, Perceived Parenting Style Scale to measure parenting styles across its three domains (authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive) and birth order was self-reported. Purposive sampling was optimized with the inclusion criteria of the specified age range and exclusion criteria of only children. 86 responses were assessed through correlation analysis and ANOVA. Notable correlations emerged: a moderately positive association between trait EI and authoritative PS, and a negative association of trait EI with authoritarian PS. Global trait EI, emotionality and sociability were found to be higher in first-borns compared to second-born. The research suggests that, children experiencing a combination of nurturing warmth, positive expectations, and care for younger offsprings, they tend to develop a deeper understanding and communication of their own emotions. This fosters stronger interpersonal relationships and enhances their ability to assert themselves socially, potentially contributing to a positive relationship of authoritative parenting style and higher birth order to trait emotional intelligence.

Keywords: Trait Emotional Intelligence, Birth Order, Perceived Parenting Styles.

Trait EI has been found to predict life satisfaction (Koydemir et al., 2013), mental health (Davis & Humphrey, 2012), and academic performance (Perera & DiGiacomo, 2013) among many other characteristics. Thus, studying trait EI and probing its relationship with other important factors in the early advancement of a child, like birth order and how child perceives their parenting, is crucial.

Emotional Intelligence (EI), the ability to understand emotions in oneself and others, and to use emotional information to guide one's thinking has, been attracting a mounting body of research. Measures of EI can be broadly categorized as ability measures and trait measures. Ability measures assess EI as a construct of

cognitive-emotional ability which are performance-based measures with moderate to strong correlations with general cognitive ability. Trait measures, on the other hand, assess EI as a construct of personality traits that are self-reported while being orthogonal to general cognitive abilities. These construe the behavioral dispositions and self-perceptions of the respondent to identify, process, and respond to emotional information. (Petrides, Furnham & Frederickson, 2004)

Perceived Parenting Style is the approach of a child about their parents' parenting style. Parenting style can be broadly classified into Authoritative, Authoritarian, and Permissive Parenting Style. Many factors can affect parenthood. For example, high-SES parents

use more affection, explanations, inductive discipline, and verbal compliments with older children and youth; set higher developmental goals including academics; and grant their offsprings to make decisions more than low-SES parents. Strict directions, disparagement, and corporal punishment are more common in low-SES households. Parents in South Asian cultures are highly engaged in promoting self-control and high achievement, withholding praise to instill self-satisfaction in analogy to Western parents. This makes their parenting style less warm and more controlling (Berk, 2010). The daughters in a study by Vyas and Bano (2016) experienced more positive parenting from both parents than the sons.

Parenting is a crucial factor in the progression of emotional intelligence. Parents are the constant providers of social, emotional, physical, economic, and intellectual stimulation from birth to, at least, maturity. Researchers have found parallelism between EI and dimensions of parenting like overprotectiveness and authoritarianism were related negatively, and warmth was related positively (Nguyen et al., 2020). Relationships of EI with parenting styles have also been assessed. A strong parallelism between authoritative parenting style and EI has been found most persistently (Cameron et al., 2020; Huang et al., 2017; Argyriou et al., 2016). The correlation between the other two parenting styles and EI has been less consistent. Argyriou and colleagues (2016) found a negative correlation between EI and authoritarian parenting style, while Chong & Chan (2015) found it to be insignificant and yet Joseph and Mathew (2022) found a significantly weak positive correlation of EI with authoritarian parenting style of the father. The relationship of EI with permissive parenting style by both parents separately was identified as significant but weak positive by Joseph & Mathew (2022) and Chong & Chang, (2015). Whereas Mishra and Singh

(2022) found a negative correlation of permissive parenting with EI. Argyriou and colleagues (2016) found an insignificant correlation between the two.

Emotional intelligence is also influenced by birth order (Fatima & Ashraf, 2018). Birth order is the order of birth among siblings. First born score higher on neuroticism (Gupta, 2017), are more assertive and dominant (Sulloway, 2001), and conscientious (Paulhus, Trapnell, & Chen, 1999; Sulloway, 2001). Later born are more sociable (Sulloway, 2001), agreeable, and non-conforming (Paulhus, Trapnell, & Chen, 1999; Sulloway, 2001) compared to the former ones. It has been emphasized by Myers & Bjorklund (2018), that each child competes for love from both parents. Venkateshwar and Warriar (2017) found no valuable difference in EI across birth order. Majumder and Das (2020) found that elder-born possess more emotional maturity as compared to younger siblings.

Objective

The objective of the current study is to understand the relationship between Trait Emotional Intelligence and Perceived Parenting Style. It also aims to assess the differences of Trait Emotional Intelligence across birth order.

Hypotheses

- H1: There is no significant correlation between perceived authoritative parenting style and global trait EI.
- H2: There is no significant correlation between perceived authoritarian parenting style and global trait EI.
- H3: There is no significant correlation between perceived permissive parenting style and global trait EI.
- H4: There is no significant difference in global trait EI across birth order.

- H5: There is no significant difference in self-control across birth order.
- H6: There is no significant difference in emotionality across birth order.
- H7: There is no significant difference in well-being across birth order.
- H8: There is no significant difference in sociability across birth order.

Method

Sample

The study recruited a total of 86 participants aged between 18 to 25 years. Inclusion criteria were that the participants have a sibling and are within the age range of 18-25 years. Exclusion criteria constituted participants less than 18 years and more than 25 years of age, and only children. Purposive sampling was employed to choose a sample according to the inclusion-exclusion criteria. This method aimed to scrutinize potential differences in perceived parenting styles and emotional intelligence across birth orders, primarily from university settings and local communities.

Tools

Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue-SF): The questionnaire has been constructed by K.V. Petrides (2009) and it provides scores in terms of global EI, emotionality, self-control, well-being, and sociability. The emotionality dimension measures how well individuals perceive and express emotions which affects their significant interpersonal relationships. The self-control dimension measures if individuals can express their emotions without repression or impulsive action which helps them regulate themselves through stress. The sociability dimension measures how well individuals can connect and communicate with diverse people in general which impacts their social interaction and influence. The well-being dimension measures whether

individuals feel happy and fulfilled, whether from past achievements or future expectations. The instrument's reliability and validity are consistently demonstrated across scientific literature employing the TEIQue-SF. O'Connor and colleagues (2017) found its internal reliability of $\alpha = .88$. The incremental validity of the TEIQue-SF in predicting 7 construct-relevant criteria has been found by Andrei and colleagues (2016). A high correlation was found by Laborde and colleagues (2016) between scoring on the TEIQue-SF and TEIQue-LF for each subscale and the global trait emotional intelligence EI : well-being ($r = 0.76$), self-control ($r = 0.69$), emotionality ($r = 0.78$), sociability ($r = 0.71$), and global trait EI ($r = 0.83$).

Perceived Parenting Style Scale: The scale has been developed by Divya and Manikandan (2013) and gives scores across authoritative, authoritarian and permissive parenting styles. Its measure of authoritative parenting style includes open communication with clear guidelines along with nurturance and encouragement in decision making. The measure of the authoritarian parenting style includes criticism, comparison, lack of affection, and support in problem-solving. The permissive parenting style includes little to no restrictions, guidelines, demands on the child, and treating the child as a friend. The Perceived Parenting Style Scale demonstrates reliability with Cronbach's Alpha coefficients: authoritative style = 0.79, authoritarian = 0.81, and permissive = 0.86, indicating acceptable internal consistency. Additionally, the authors assert face validity for the PPSS, suggesting that the scale effectively measures what it intends to evaluate, bolstering its credibility as a tool to assess parenting styles.

Birth Order

The birth order was self-reported by the research participants.

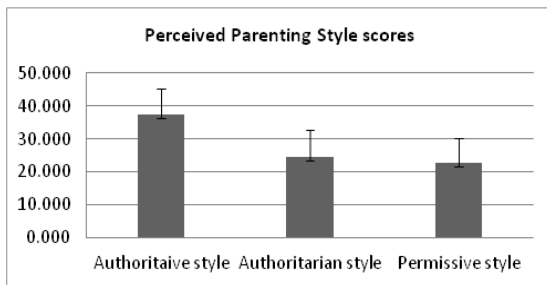
Ethical concerns

The research design was discussed with a team of experienced researchers and their feedbacks were incorporated. Informed consent was obtained from each participant before data collection. The data was not shared with any third party at any point of time. Both the tools used in the study were taken from author’s publicly published work with permission to be used for research purposes, and they have been cited for the same.

Procedure

The procedure commenced with a rigorous literature review to select appropriate scales. Participants, meeting the inclusion criteria of 18 to 25 years, completed questionnaires assessing Perceived Parenting Style and Emotional Intelligence (EI) through a Google Forms survey. Additionally, self-reported birth order was collected within the form. Attention-checking questions regarding age/year of birth aided in identifying unreliable responses, subsequently filtered out before analysis. Due to less than 10 responses for each category of third-born, their data were excluded, retaining a viable dataset. SPSS was employed for analysis. Pearson’s correlation coefficients were assessed for each perceived parenting style and global trait EI, while ANOVA was used to explore differences in EI domains and perceived parenting styles across birth orders.

Results



Graph 1. Mean scores and standard deviation on Perceived Parenting Style Scale



Graph 2. Mean scores and standard deviation on Perceived Parenting Style Scale

Table 1. Correlation between Perceived Parenting Styles and Global Trait EI

Parenting Style		Global Trait EI
Authoritative PS	Pearson Correlation	354**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001
Authoritarian PS	Pearson Correlation	-.254*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.019
Permissive PS	Pearson Correlation	-.199
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.067

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 2. Difference in Dimensions of EI between First Borns and Second Borns using ANOVA

Dimension of EI	F value	Sig. value
Global Trait EI	4.171	.044
Well-being	1.903	.171
Self-Control	.008	.929
Emotionality	7.998	.006
Sociability	4.366	.040

Discussion

The current study aimed to understand the interweaving of trait emotional intelligence, perceived parenting style, and

birth order among young adults aged 18-25. A total of 86 responses to the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue-SF) and the Perceived Parenting Style Scale were analyzed. Pearson's correlation was practiced to evaluate the relationship between perceived parenting styles and global trait EI, while ANOVA was employed to compare first-born and second-born individuals across global trait EI and its aspects, including emotionality, self-control, sociability, and well-being. To the best of our knowledge, the present study uniquely examines the interplay between trait emotional intelligence, birth order, and perceived parenting styles within the Indian cultural context, offering novel insights into their potential associations.

The parallelism between authoritative parenting style and EI was established positive moderately-weak, yielding statistical significance, thus rejecting H1. Conversely, the parallelism of authoritarian parenting style and EI was weakly negative and statistically significant, leading to the rejection of H2. However, the parallelism of permissive parenting style and EI was deemed statistically insignificant, failing to reject H3.

These findings align with previous research, which consistently report a positive nexus between authoritative parenting and emotional intelligence (Argyriou, et al., 2016; Huang et al., 2017; Chong & Chan, 201). Authoritative parents are characterized by both warmth and responsiveness (responding to their children's needs and emotions) and clear expectations and boundaries (providing guidance and rules). This combination fosters a secure attachment between parent and child, allowing children to develop a strong sense of self-worth and healthy emotional regulation skills (Park et al., 2019). Conversely, authoritarian parenting, characterized by strictness and control without warmth (Baumrind, 1991), has been linked to lower emotional intelligence

(Argyriou, et al., 2016; Nāstasā & Sala, 2012). Permissive parenting, described by high levels of warmth and responsiveness but minimal boundaries or expectations (Baumrind, 1991), has shown inconsistent or weak associations with emotional intelligence in previous research. While warmth and responsiveness may be beneficial, the lack of positive directions and guidance may not provide a clear framework for children to develop emotional management skills (Argyriou et al., 2016).

Furthermore, compelling differences were observed between first-borns and second-born in terms of global trait EI, emotionality, and sociability, leading to the rejection of H4, H6, and H8. Previous findings also found significant differences between the emotional maturity of eldest and youngest siblings (Fitniwillis et al., 2022) indicating that former born are higher in emotional intelligence (Edobor & Joseph, 2020). This may result from their role as caretaker for their younger siblings.

Our specific findings on emotionality and sociability contribute to the understanding of birth order's influence on different aspects of EI. With regards to emotionality, which assesses the accurate perception and expression of emotions to develop close relationships, our findings of higher emotionality in first-borns may be explained through more accurate and strong emotional coordination in first-born infant-mother interactions compared to second-born infant-mother interactions observed by Kokkinaki (2015).

While our study orients with previous research suggesting higher assertiveness and social influence (a specific interpretation of "sociability" as defined by Petrides, 2009) in first-borns (Sulloway, 2001), it diverges from studies measuring "sociability" as affection and friendliness, where first-borns might not show an advantage (Salmon, et al.,

2016). This could be a result of the divergence in meaning of the construct of sociability in different studies. This highlights the importance of considering different interpretations of constructs like “sociability” when interpreting research findings.

However, no qualitative differences were observed in self-control or well-being between the two groups, thus we fail to reject H5 and H7. This aligns with findings from other studies that haven't identified a birth order effect on subjective well-being (Jie & Zilong, 2019) or well-being in general (Laily & Sholichah, 2021) and self-control (Laily & Sholichah, 2021) across birth order. It's possible that these aspects of emotional intelligence are less influenced by birth order itself, and instead may be shaped more by broader factors like overall family environment, socioeconomic status, or individual experiences (Myers & Bjorklund, 2018). Additionally, self-control and well-being might develop and fluctuate throughout life, potentially diminishing any birth order effects that may have been present in childhood (Salmon et al., 2016).

Limitations

The study relied on self-reported measures, introducing response bias. It assessed parenting styles solely from adolescents' perceptions, lacking parental input. Since the sample was limited to 18-25-year-olds, results may not be broadly generalizable.

Applications

Understanding the relationship between trait EI and parenting aids educators in crafting interventions for young adults' emotional growth. This study enriches developmental psychology by mapping EI correlations with diverse parenting styles and birth orders. Future research could explore cross-cultural factors and conduct longitudinal studies to further insights.

Exploring the factors responsible for higher trait EI, emotionality and sociability in first-borns could also be a useful line of research.

Conclusion

The current research aimed to understand the relationship of trait Emotional Intelligence (EI) with Perceived Parenting Styles and Birth Order among emerging adults. It was recognized that there exists a moderately positive correlation between EI and authoritative parenting, a negative correlation with authoritarian parenting, and an insignificant correlation with permissive parenting. Global trait EI, emotionality and sociability was found to be greater in first-borns vis-à-vis second-born. Thus, the study highlights the relationship between perceived parenting and trait EI along with the influence of birth order on trait EI.

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