



## DIGITAL PARENTING & ITS IMPACT ON EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF ADOLESCENTS

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### Abstract

*Family plays a central role in the emotional, social, and psychological development of adolescents. With the increasing integration of digital technology in daily life, parenting practices are evolving, giving rise to digital parenting—strategies and methods that parents use to guide, monitor, and support their children’s online activities. This study examines how digital parenting influences the emotional development of adolescents, emotional regulation, empathy, self-esteem, and resilience. The qualitative descriptive method with a participatory approach is taken whereby one gathers the data on 100 adolescents and their parents using the standardized questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and observational checklists. The scales include emotion indicators measured with the following scales: The Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale -Short Form (DERS-SF), Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI), Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES), and Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC-10). The Digital Parenting Style Scale (DPSS) is used to determine digital parenting styles. The results reveal that, adolescents who have supportive/ active parents have better emotional control and empathy, self-esteem and resilience than adolescents with restrictive or permissive parents. The research finds out that active and responsive digital parenting has a positive emotional outcome, and over control or inconsistency may inhibit the outcome of emotional development. The findings help highlight the need to strike a balance between technological instruction and emotional support to promote a healthy emotional development among the teenage generation in the digital era.*

**Keywords:** Digital Parenting, Adolescents, Emotional Development, Emotional Regulation, Empathy, Self-Esteem, Resilience, Parenting Styles.



## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Adolescence is a very critical period of development whereby physical, mental and emotional transformation is very fast. That is why emotional development is the important part of the overall well-being of adolescents as it is the time when they learn more about their independence, social relationships, and self-identity. The family as the main socializing unit is important in the development of the emotional, social and psychological development of the adolescents.

As the use of digital technology becomes a common practice, parenting values are also changing to meet new challenges and opportunities brought about by an online environment. Digital parenting can be defined as the strategies and methods that parents employ in order to mentor, monitors, and assist their digital interactions such as use of social media, online games, online access among others. The impact of parental responsibility in regulating digital activities on the emotional development of adolescents can be high, in terms of emotional regulation, empathy, resilience, and self-esteem.

The studies have shown that various digital parenting styles, such as supportive/active, restrictive, and permissive ones, may produce different consequences on the emotional well-being of adolescents. Parents who are supportive are the ones who actively interact with their children, they give guidance and discuss about the online experiences, restrictive parents are strict and have rules and limitations on the children and permissive parents are the ones who do little in the way of supervision. The effects of these parenting styles on the emotional development of adolescents is a critical issue of understanding because it is likely to assist families in the digital era to promote healthier emotional development of adolescents.

### **1.1.Objectives of the Study**

- To examine the impact of different digital parenting styles (supportive, restrictive, permissive) on the emotional development of adolescents.
- To assess key emotional indicators of adolescents, including emotional regulation, empathy, self-esteem, and resilience, in relation to parental digital guidance.
- To explore the relationship between parental involvement in digital activities and adolescents' overall emotional well-being.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

**Aziz, et al. (2022)** explored digital parenting behaviours in children and adolescents and highlighted that parental engagement in digital activities played an important role in the effects on behaviour and emotional outcomes. They discovered that those parents that proactively coached, monitored, and talked about online life with their children were in a position to create a safer and more fruitful online interaction. This research brought into light that digital parenting was not confined to regulating screen time or blocking access but a blend of supervision, discussion and support, which led to the positive emotional and social growth of the children.

**Supriyadi and Maesyaroh (2023)** paid attention to the impact of parenting styles and digital literacy of parents on social-emotional development of early childhood children. They found out that children who had parents who integrated their supportive parenting styles with increased digital literacy showed better emotional regulation, empathy and social competence. The paper has also highlighted that low-digital literate parents had difficulties in successfully guiding their children, which may lead to less ideal emotional gains. The findings highlighted the role of providing not only awareness but also skills of using digital tools to the parents to facilitate comprehensive growth of children in the contemporary digital world.

**Kalkim, et al. (2024)** examined the connection between the self-efficacy of parents to digital parenting and awareness of digital parenting in early adolescents. The research found out that parents who thought that they could handle the digital activities of their children and who understood possible digital risks were more likely to adopt effective guidance and monitoring strategies. This prosocial engagement was associated with a higher emotional well-being among adolescents since they had more abilities to cope with online problems and manage emotions. The authors proposed that digital parenting through self-efficacy enabled parents to use uniform and supportive styles, which had a direct impact on the emotional development of adolescents.

**Manap (2024)** studied the effects that digital parenting awareness may have on the emotion regulation abilities of children. The researchers concluded that parental awareness of the dangers of the digital age, as well as proactive parenting, led to better emotional and stress management and resilience acquisition among children. The study pointed out that awareness was not enough

but knowledge coupled with practical interaction like online supervision, talking about online experiences and establishing proper boundaries was necessary in nurturing healthy emotional development in parents.

### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. Research Design

A qualitative research design used in this study is a descriptive study design that uses a participatory approach. In the qualitative descriptive approach, it is possible to engage in an extensive investigation of the emotional development of adolescents regarding digital parenting practice. The participatory element promotes participation by both parents and adolescents and allows having a more profound idea of the behaviors, attitudes, and experiences in the digital realm.

#### 3.2. Population and Sample

- **Population:** The target population will be the urban adolescents between the age of 13 and 18 years old and their parents in urban school and community environment.
- **Sample Size:** 100 adolescents and their parents are randomly sampled by purposive sampling with a consideration that all the participants are regularly exposed to digital technology and their parents are monitoring them at home.
- **Inclusion Criteria:**
  - Adolescents aged 13–18 years.
  - Parents who are vigorously engaged in organizing or steering digital activities of children.
- **Exclusion Criteria:**
  - Teenagers whose psychology is severely disordered to an extent of emotional test.
  - Families that lack digital access.

### 3.3. Data Collection Tools

Data for the study is collected using standardized questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and observational checklists. Emotional development indicators of adolescents are measured using well-established psychological scales. Emotional regulation is assessed using the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale – Short Form (DERS-SF). Empathy is measured using the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI). Self-esteem is assessed through the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES). Resilience is measured using the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC-10).

To assess digital parenting styles, a structured questionnaire based on the Digital Parenting Style Scale (DPSS) is used to classify parents as supportive/active, restrictive, or permissive. Semi-structured interviews are conducted with parents to explore perceptions regarding digital monitoring and the emotional responses of adolescents. Observational checklists are used to document parent-adolescent interactions during digital device usage to support the self-reported data.

### 3.4. Variables of the Study

- **Independent Variable:** Digital Parenting Styles
  - Supportive/Active Parenting
  - Restrictive Parenting
  - Permissive Parenting
- **Dependent Variable:** Emotional Development Indicators in Adolescents
  - Emotional Regulation
  - Empathy
  - Self-Esteem
  - Resilience

### 3.5. Data Collection Procedure

The data collection is preceded by permission with the school authorities and parents. Teenagers and their parents are informed of the objective of the study and guaranteed confidentiality. Adolescents get and fill in structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews are carried out with parents. Also, the interactions between parents and adolescents when using digital devices are observed and documented to complement the information.

### 3.6. Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics are applied in analyzing questionnaire quantitative data to measure emotional development indicators expressed in mean scores, percentages and frequency distributions. Cross-tabulation is used to determine how parenting styles and emotional outcomes are related to each other. Interpretations of qualitative data made up of interviews are conducted using thematic analysis in order to reveal patterns and themes of digital parenting and adolescent emotions. Results are also given in tables so as to be understandable and make comparisons.

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section demonstrates the results of the research, such as the demographic characteristics of the participants, the percentage of distribution digital parenting styles, the indicators of emotional development in adolescents, and the correlation between the parenting styles and emotional outcomes. The findings have been presented in the form of tables to make them easy to compare.

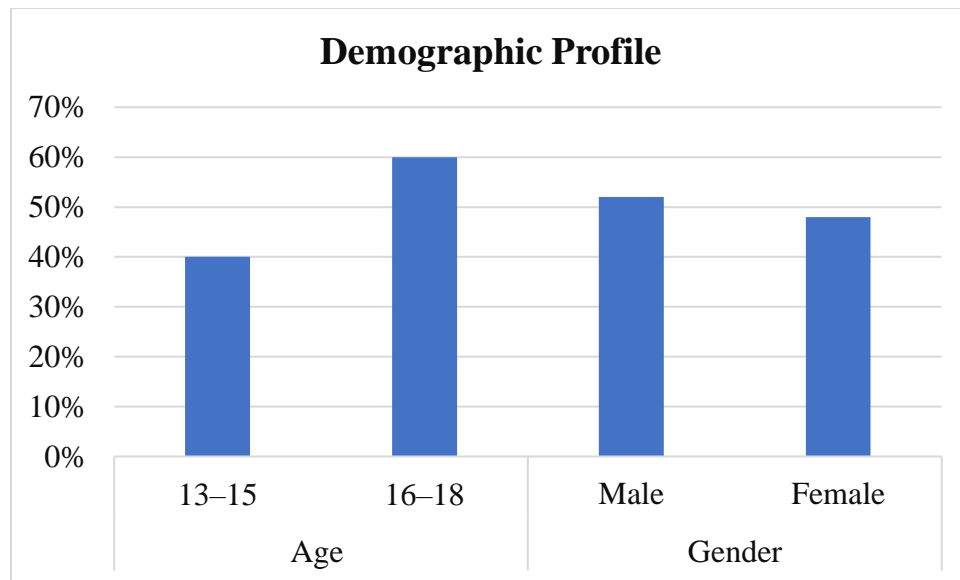
### 4.1. Demographic Profile

The demographic characteristics of the participants are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Demographic Profile

Demographic Variable		Frequency (n=100)	Percentage (%)
Age	13–15	40	40%
	16–18	60	60%

<b>Gender</b>	Male	52	52%
	Female	48	48%



**Figure 1:** Graphical Representation of Demographic Profile

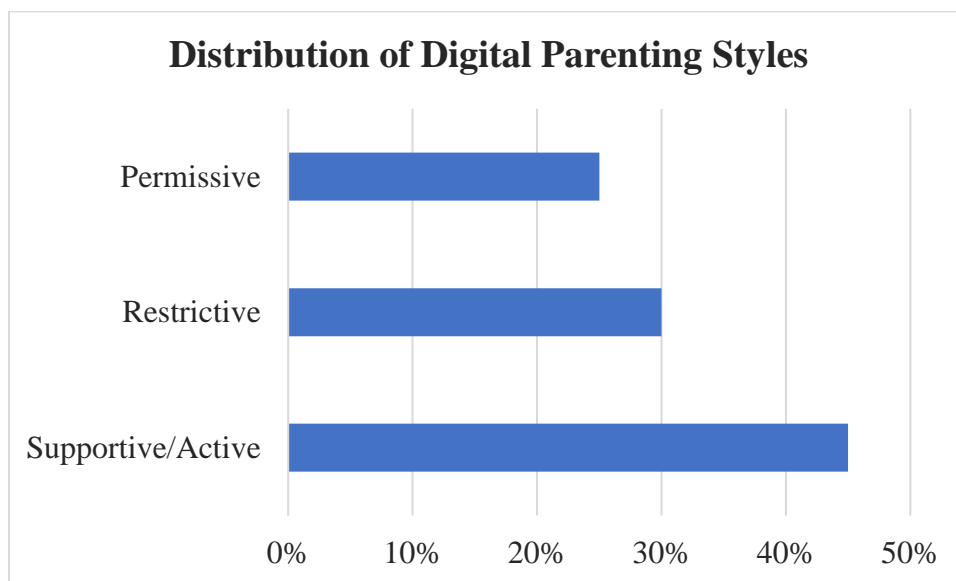
The sample size in the study is 100 adolescents who are aged 13-18 years. A bigger percentage of the sample (60) are aged 16-18 years with 40 being aged 13-15 years. The gender distribution is well balanced, 52 percent of the participants are males and 48 percent are females. This population sample offers a reflection of the adolescents at mid-to-late adolescent stage, which will enable the research to study the effects of digital parenting at various adolescent stages.

#### 4.2. Distribution of Digital Parenting Styles

The distribution of digital parenting styles among the participants is presented in Table 2.

**Table 2:** Distribution of Digital Parenting Styles

Parenting Style	Frequency	Percentage
Supportive/Active	45	45%
Restrictive	30	30%
Permissive	25	25%



**Figure 2:** Graphical Representation of Distribution of Digital Parenting Styles

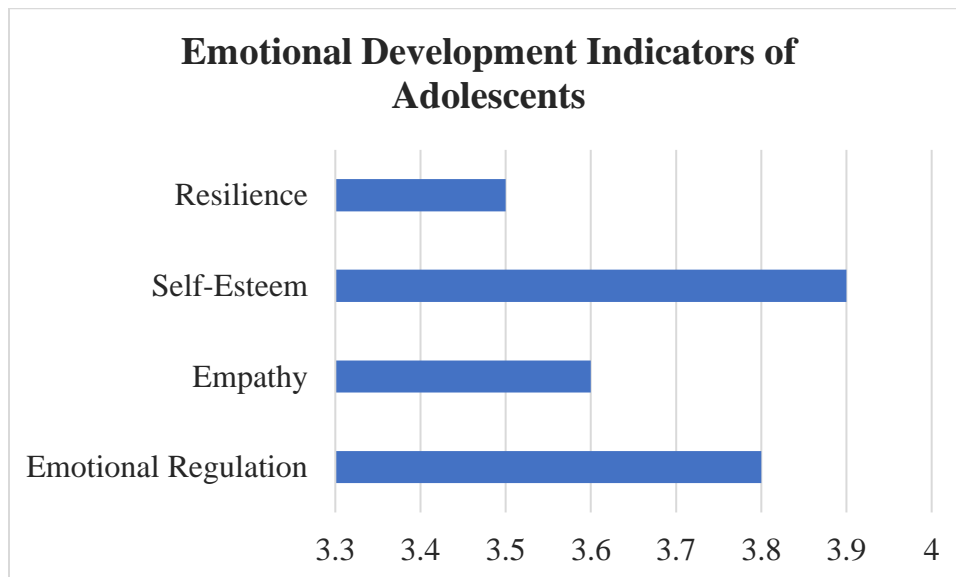
The results show that the most frequented type of parenting is supporting/active parenting which is practiced by 45 percent of parents which implies that a large number of parents engage and provide direction in the digital activities of their adolescent. Restrictive parenting explains 30 percent, which portrays parents who have tight regulations and boundaries on the use of technology. The least style is the permissive one, which is practiced by 25 percent of the parents, meaning that the parent has low levels of supervision or direction within the digital activities. In general, the findings indicate that most of the parents are proactive in their approach to digital parenting and it can affect emotional growth of adolescents.

### 4.3. Emotional Development Indicators

Table 3 gives the mean of the adolescent scores on different indicators of emotional development.

**Table 3:** Emotional Development Indicators of Adolescents

Emotional Indicator	Mean Score (out of 5)	Interpretation
Emotional Regulation	3.8	High
Empathy	3.6	Moderate-High
Self-Esteem	3.9	High
Resilience	3.5	Moderate



**Figure 3:** Graphical Representation of Emotional Development Indicators of Adolescents

The findings show that the adolescents have rather high emotional regulation (mean = 3.8) and self-esteem (mean = 3.9) which proves that they are generally capable of regulating their emotions and holding a positive view of themselves. The empathy scores are moderate-high (mean = 3.6), which depict a fair understanding capacity in others and their feelings. The resilience level is

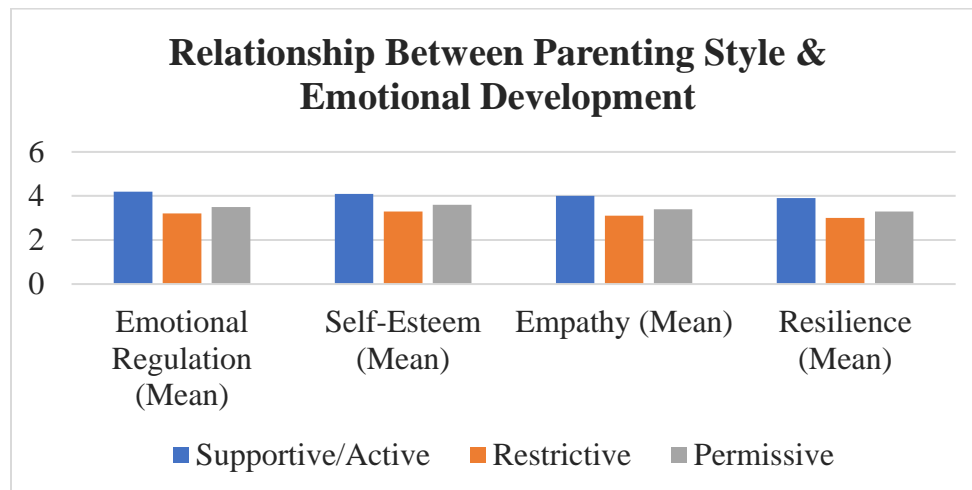
moderate (mean = 3.5) and it means that adolescents are able to manage the challenges, but it can be enhanced. In general, these results are indicative that the emotional development of the teenagers involved in the study can be defined as rather positive and the digital forms of parenting of the parents possible.

#### 4.4. Relationship Between Parenting Style & Emotional Development

Table 4 provides the relationship between various digital strategies of parenting and emotional development of adolescents.

**Table 4:** Relationship Between Digital Parenting Styles and Emotional Development Indicators

Parenting Style	Emotional Regulation (Mean)	Self-Esteem (Mean)	Empathy (Mean)	Resilience (Mean)
Supportive/Active	4.2	4.1	4.0	3.9
Restrictive	3.2	3.3	3.1	3.0
Permissive	3.5	3.6	3.4	3.3



**Figure 4:** Graphical Representation of Relationship Between Digital Parenting Styles and Emotional Development Indicators



As the table demonstrates, adolescents who have positive/supportive parents have the greatest mean scores in all indicators of emotional development emotion regulation (4.2), self-esteem (4.1), empathy (4.0) as well as resilience (3.9), which indicates that proactive guidance and engagement in the digital activity have beneficial effects on the emotional outcomes. Teenagers whose parents are restrictive report the lowest scores, which indicates that the overcontrolling parenting styles can impaired emotional development. Others whose parents are permissive score moderately which shows that little guidance gives them some liberty and at the same time restricts some of their emotional growth. In general, the results indicate that positive digital parenting is the most promising in terms of improving the emotional growth of adolescents.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

The results of this research indicate the importance of digital parenting in determining the emotional growth of adolescents. Positive emotional results are observed in adolescents who have supportive and actively involved parents indicating that guidance, supervision, and open communication on digital platforms can lead to positive emotional outcomes. On the contrary, restrictive parenting where rules are strict and parents interact very little and permissive parenting where there is little supervision are linked to lower scores in emotional development, which means that they may struggle to cope with stress and develop well-functioning social-emotional skills. The paper emphasizes the necessity of balancing between technological monitoring and emotional support and notes that parents should be proactive, adaptive, and engaged in the digital activities of their children. Through this, they are able to foster emotional maturity, resilience, and well-being so that the teenagers can learn to cope with the online and offline worlds. The insights offer helpful advice to parents, educators, and policymakers in order to help adolescents grow emotionally in the digital age.

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