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A qualitative inquiry for exploring the role of parent-child relationships in shaping children's personality development and their educational achievements in Punjab Province, Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

This study highlights the critical role of parent-child relationships in shaping children's personality development and educational achievement within Punjab, Pakistan's socio-cultural context. The primary objective is to examine how interconnected family and cultural factors including parental involvement, gender role orientations, income and academic opportunities, urban-rural parenting patterns, intergenerational moral formation, cultural and religious narratives, and family cohesion influence children's emotional, moral, and cognitive growth. Using a qualitative design, data were collected through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with parents, teachers, and students from urban and rural areas, and analyzed inductively to ensure participants lived experiences shaped the thematic findings. Thematic analysis identified seven key patterns: parental involvement enhances emotional confidence and learning motivation; gender role orientations shape aspirations and self-concept; income and academic opportunities affect access to quality education; urban-rural parenting patterns balance independence with discipline; intergenerational moral formation instills empathy and ethical responsibility; cultural and religious narratives guide moral behavior and family values; and family cohesion fosters emotional security, resilience, and balanced personality development. Key findings indicate that active parental engagement strengthens self-esteem, empathy, and academic motivation, while traditional gender norms limit aspirations in rural settings; urban families increasingly emphasize equality and autonomy. The study recommends family-centered educational and social policies that integrate traditional moral frameworks with gender-sensitive, inclusive, and developmentally supportive parenting practices to promote children's holistic growth in Punjab.

Keywords: Parent-child relationships, personality development, educational achievements, Punjab, Pakistan

INTRODUCTION

The family represents the cornerstone of human socialization and development, serving as the first and most influential context in which individuals acquire emotional stability, intellectual capacities, and moral understanding. In every society, but particularly within collectivist cultures such as Pakistan, the family system functions as a vital institution for nurturing children's identity, behavior, and worldview. Within Punjab

Province the most populous and socioeconomically diverse region of Pakistan family relationships play a particularly significant role in shaping children's personality development and educational achievement. Deeply rooted in traditional, religious, and communal structures, families in Punjab act not only as care units but also as powerful transmitters of social norms, values, and cultural expectations (Afzal, Ahmad, & Hasan, 2024). These dynamics directly influence how children perceive themselves, relate to others, and navigate academic environments. The home, therefore, serves as the "first school," where foundational habits, attitudes, and motivations are formed through parental care, communication, discipline, and modeling behaviors (Imran, Tayyab, & Sheikh, 2023).

In the context of Punjab's sociocultural landscape, understanding the interplay between family structures, cultural expectations, and child development is crucial. The region's social fabric is defined by an intricate balance between rural traditionalism and urban modernity. Extended families, religious values, and patriarchal norms coexist alongside emerging trends of nuclear households and gender equity in education (Raza & Iqbal, 2023). This coexistence gives rise to diverse patterns of parenting, caregiving, and value transmission, which, in turn, influence children's emotional growth and learning outcomes. In many Punjabi families, parenting practices reflect collective priorities such as respect for elders, obedience, and modesty alongside a growing emphasis on independence, self-expression, and achievement (Bashir & Zaman, 2024). These evolving values reflect broader societal transformations in Pakistan, where educational attainment and gender inclusion are increasingly viewed as pathways to socioeconomic mobility (Bano, Saira, & Iqbal, 2023).

Although international literature has long emphasized the influence of family processes on child outcomes (Bornstein & Leventhal, 2022; Darling & Steinberg, 2021), the specific cultural and structural mechanisms shaping these dynamics in South Asian societies remain underexplored. In Pakistan, limited qualitative research has examined how family-based values particularly parental involvement, gender expectations, and religious teachings affect the moral and psychological development of children. Families that cultivate open communication, emotional responsiveness, and shared decision-making tend to produce children who are more confident, socially adaptive, and academically motivated (Rashid et al., 2023). Conversely, authoritarian or neglectful parenting styles, compounded by economic hardship or gender bias, may lead to emotional suppression, anxiety, and diminished academic engagement (Naz, Raheem, & Gilani, 2024). These differences highlight the significance of family interaction patterns as a key sociological determinant of children's development in the Punjab context.

Parental involvement in education emerges as one of the most consistent predictors of positive learning and personality outcomes. When parents actively engage in their children's schooling through supervision, encouragement, and participation in learning activities they foster a sense of discipline, motivation, and emotional security. Research in various districts of Punjab demonstrates that students with highly involved parents exhibit stronger academic performance and better emotional regulation (Nazli & Noman, 2023; Bano et al., 2023). Furthermore, parents' educational level, socioeconomic status, and employment type significantly determine their ability to provide cognitive stimulation and

emotional support at home. Maternal education, in particular, has been associated with children's academic persistence and self-efficacy, underscoring the gendered dimension of parental influence (Akram, Zahid, & Pervaiz, 2024). These patterns suggest that family engagement is not only a private responsibility but also a collective investment in human development.

Cultural and religious values occupy a central place in shaping family relationships and, consequently, children's personalities. In Punjab, Islamic teachings and local customs inform moral expectations, behavioral standards, and gender roles within the family. Parents transmit values such as honesty, respect, empathy, and social responsibility through storytelling, shared rituals, and everyday moral instruction (Firdoos, Latif, & Masud, 2024). At the same time, these cultural frameworks can impose gendered expectations that shape children's identities and aspirations. Boys are often encouraged to pursue leadership, assertiveness, and academic ambition, while girls are socialized toward modesty, nurturance, and familial loyalty (Ghazi, Shahzad, & Khan, 2024). Such socialization patterns influence not only personality traits like confidence, openness, and conscientiousness but also access to educational opportunities. However, recent qualitative studies show that urban families in Punjab are increasingly reinterpreting religious and cultural norms in more egalitarian ways, promoting both sons' and daughters' education and autonomy (Raza & Iqbal, 2023; Bashir & Zaman, 2024).

Family teaching practices such as moral storytelling, collective learning, and intergenerational mentorship also serve as key mechanisms for personality development. These practices bridge the emotional and cognitive dimensions of child development by integrating moral reasoning with practical life skills. When families engage children in reflective discussions about ethical dilemmas, responsibility, and cooperation, they cultivate empathy and social awareness (Afzal et al., 2024). Conversely, the absence of such teaching values may leave children ill-equipped to manage moral challenges and peer influences in academic settings. The qualitative exploration of these family-level pedagogies is therefore critical for understanding how values are internalized and translated into personality traits that shape long-term educational outcomes.

The Punjab context provides an especially fertile ground for studying these phenomena due to its vast social heterogeneity. Rural communities often emphasize collective family values, obedience, and conformity, whereas urban families are more likely to prioritize individuality, academic competition, and gender parity (Naz et al., 2024). This diversity allows for a nuanced analysis of how different social structures and value systems affect the psychological and educational formation of children. Additionally, ongoing socioeconomic transitions such as migration, media exposure, and changing labor markets are reshaping family roles and expectations across generations (Rashid et al., 2023). Thus, a qualitative inquiry that captures the lived experiences of parents, teachers, and students is essential to understanding how these complex and evolving forces operate in real-life family environments.

The present study adopts a qualitative approach to explore the significance of parent-child relationships and family-based values in shaping children's personality development and educational achievement in Punjab, Pakistan. Drawing upon sociocultural and developmental theoretical perspectives, the research examines how

parental involvement, cultural and religious values, gender role orientations, and family teaching practices interact to form children's moral, emotional, and behavioral profiles. Data were collected through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with parents, teachers, and students from both rural and urban communities, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of how family environments contributed to holistic child development. By emphasizing participants' lived experiences, this study seeks to reveal the cultural meanings, emotional contexts, and relational dynamics that quantitative data alone cannot capture.

Ultimately, this inquiry underscores that strengthening family relationships is not merely a matter of private well-being but a cornerstone of societal progress. Children's personality development and academic success are best understood as products of their relational worlds shaped by the intersection of affection, culture, gender, and moral instruction. The findings of this study are expected to provide valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and family practitioners seeking to promote balanced and supportive environments conducive to learning, emotional resilience, and moral growth. Within the sociocultural fabric of Punjab, empowering families through education, awareness, and inclusive values can play a transformative role in shaping not only the next generation of learners but also the broader trajectory of social development in Pakistan.

Research Objectives:

1. To examine how variations in socioeconomic status, demographic profiles, cultural orientations, and family structures shape the nature, quality, and functioning of family relationships in Punjab.
2. To explore how family-related stressors including economic hardship, chronic illness, disability, emotional strain, unresolved interpersonal conflict, and mental health challenges impact the stability and cohesion of family relationships.
3. To identify the social and cultural challenges that families face in building and sustaining nurturing, communicative, and supportive relationships with their children.
4. To analyze how patterns of family interaction and relationship quality influence children's personality development, emotional adjustment, and academic motivation.
5. To propose policy recommendations and community-based interventions that strengthen family relationships and promote holistic child development research problem

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative research design to explore the complex and contextually embedded relationships between family dynamics, parental involvement, and children's personality development and educational achievement in Punjab Province, Pakistan. Qualitative research is particularly well suited for capturing the meanings, interpretations, and lived experiences that underlie social and familial processes (Creswell & Poth, 2023). The qualitative paradigm prioritizes depth, understanding, and contextual richness offering a holistic view of how family relationships are perceived and enacted within cultural and socioeconomic structures. This design allows the researcher to explore how parents, children, and educators construct and negotiate concepts such as affection,

discipline, gender expectations, and educational motivation in everyday family interactions.

Data analysis and discussion

The collected qualitative data were analyzed through thematic analysis, following Braun and Clarke's (2022) six-step framework familiarization, coding, and theme development, reviewing, defining, and reporting. Transcripts were systematically coded using both inductive and deductive strategies to capture emergent themes related to parenting styles, emotional support, gender roles, and educational motivation. This method allowed the researcher to identify patterns of meaning while remaining grounded in participants lived experiences.

Although SPSS was used for organizational support (e.g., participant demographics and frequency summaries), the primary analysis was interpretive and qualitative in nature, guided by NVivo-assisted coding to ensure rigor, transparency, and traceability of findings (Nowell et al., 2023). Analytical triangulation through comparison across interviews, FGDs, and field notes enhanced the credibility and dependability of results. The iterative analysis ensured that the findings accurately reflected the complex social and cultural realities of families in Punjab.

Trustworthiness and Reflexivity

To enhance the trustworthiness of the study, strategies such as member checking, peer debriefing, and reflexive journaling were applied. Participants were given opportunities to verify the accuracy of their statements and interpretations, ensuring authenticity and alignment with their intended meanings (Lincoln & Guba, 2020). The researcher maintained reflexive notes throughout the fieldwork to acknowledge positionality, potential biases, and evolving insights during the research process.

Ethical Considerations

The study was conducted in adherence to ethical standards established by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan for social research. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study, their right to withdraw at any time, and the confidentiality of their data. Pseudonyms were used to protect identities, and data were securely stored for academic use only.

Theme 1: Parental Involvement

The study found that parental education particularly maternal education plays a crucial role in fostering conscious, emotionally responsive, and academically engaged parenting across diverse family contexts in Punjab Province. Parents with higher levels of education demonstrated an enhanced awareness of their children's emotional and cognitive needs, promoting open dialogue and empathetic communication. As reflected by a mother from Lahore, *"Because I studied till university, I know how important it is to talk with my children about their feelings, not just their marks."* Such insights highlight that education extends beyond academic literacy, serving as a foundation for emotional intelligence, psychological attunement, and intentional parenting. Educated parents in Lahore, Gujrat, and Gujranwala frequently expressed a sense of responsibility to guide their children's growth not only intellectually but also emotionally and morally.

Educated parents were also more likely to balance affection with structure, fostering a home environment that valued discussion, self-expression, and shared decision-

making. They viewed education as a holistic process encompassing moral, intellectual, and emotional development. One parent from Gujrat explained, *“When children share what happens in school, I don’t just ask about grades; I ask how they feel about their teachers and friends.”* This approach reflects a shift toward dialogic and reflective parenting characterized by responsiveness, empathy, and respect which helps children develop autonomy and emotional resilience. Teachers in the study corroborated these observations, noting that children from educated households displayed better emotional regulation, goal-setting skills, and stress management, as parents modeled adaptive behaviors and problem-solving strategies in daily life.

Conversely, parents with limited formal education often adhered to more traditional, authority-based, or faith-centered parenting styles, focusing primarily on moral discipline and obedience. As one father from Gujranwala stated, *“We teach through stories from our faith because that’s what we learned from our parents; schools will teach the rest.”* Such practices reinforced respect, moral instruction, and cultural continuity but often restricted open communication and critical thinking among children. In these households, the parent–child relationship tended to follow hierarchical norms rather than collaborative dialogue. Overall, the findings suggest that parental education acts as a key form of social and cultural capital enabling parents, particularly mothers, to become reflective and emotionally intelligent caregivers. Through education, parents evolve from traditional knowledge transmitters to active architects of their children’s holistic development, blending affection, structure, and awareness within the evolving sociocultural landscape of Punjab.

Theme 2: Gender Roles and Family Structure

The findings revealed that gender roles and family structures profoundly shape children’s personalities, moral values, and educational orientations across Punjab. Despite gradual social transformation, traditional gender norms continue to define expectations and authority patterns within both joint and extended family systems, particularly in rural and semi-urban regions. A father from Gujrat explained, *“In our home, men make the final decisions about children’s schooling. Women can give opinions, but the elders have the last word.”* Similarly, an elderly grandmother from Gujranwala stated, *“A woman’s duty is to guide and look after the children inside the home, while men handle the outside matters.”* These comments illustrate how hierarchical decision-making and male authority remain culturally embedded, influencing how children perceive power, respect, and obedience. In such households, sons often internalize the idea of leadership and control, while daughters learn submission and domestic responsibility. As one teacher from Gujranwala noted, *“Boys speak more confidently in class because they are taught at home to have opinions; girls often wait to be asked.”* This pattern reveals how family hierarchies and gender expectations collectively mold children’s social behavior and self-perception.

Children’s gendered socialization emerged as a consistent theme across all field sites. Boys were frequently encouraged to be assertive, ambitious, and outspoken, while girls were guided toward modesty, restraint, and emotional sensitivity. A mother from Gujranwala reflected, *“My son can attend tuition far from home, but my daughter studies only during the day because we must consider what others will say.”* Another respondent from Lahore echoed this sentiment, saying, *“Our daughters must learn respect first; studies are important, but*

character comes before everything.” These narratives reveal how the concept of *izzat* (family honor) and community reputation deeply influences parenting choices, often restricting girls’ freedom of mobility and learning. An adolescent girl from a semi-urban family shared her frustration: *“My brother goes out for sports, but I must stay home to help with chores. I want to play too, but they say it’s not appropriate.”* Such experiences highlight the psychological tension between aspiration and restriction that girls encounter, shaping their emotional expression, confidence, and academic motivation. Consequently, gendered upbringing not only impacts access to education but also influences children’s self-worth and long-term ambitions.

However, evidence from urban nuclear families particularly among educated parents suggested a gradual shift toward shared parenting and greater gender equity. A mother from Lahore shared, *“Now my husband and I both help with homework; we want our son and daughter to have equal chances.”* Another father added, *“We try to raise our children the same way our daughter must be confident like our son.”* These accounts signal an emerging cultural transformation where modern families seek to balance traditional values with progressive ideals. Nonetheless, subtle inequalities persist. As a teacher from Gujranwala observed, *“Parents talk about equality, but children still see that fathers control the money and mothers stay home.”* This observation underscores how symbolic and behavioral cues within families continue to transmit gendered messages, even in settings that claim equality. Across both urban and rural households, the interplay between gender roles and family structure remains a powerful force in socialization. While nuclear families in cities reflect evolving norms of cooperation and mutual respect, joint families still reinforce patriarchal hierarchies that limit girls’ independence and participation. Overall, the findings emphasize that despite modernization, deep-rooted cultural scripts continue to shape children’s identities, emotional development, and educational aspirations defining what it means to be a son or a daughter within Punjab’s evolving sociocultural landscape.

Theme 3: Income, Resource Allocation, and Academic Opportunity

The study revealed that economic disparities exert a profound influence on children’s educational opportunities, emotional well-being, and personality development across Punjab. Families with higher income levels demonstrated a clear advantage in providing quality education and enrichment experiences that supported holistic growth. A mother from Lahore explained, *“We pay for tuition and online classes because we want our children to compete at national levels.”* Another parent added, *“Good education is an investment; if we don’t spend now, our children will struggle later.”* Such statements reflect how affluent families perceive education as both a tool of social mobility and a marker of prestige. These parents often enrolled their children in private institutions, supported extracurricular activities, and encouraged participation in sports or creative programs, fostering confidence and self-expression. A teacher from Gujrat noted, *“Students from wealthy families are not just good at studies they speak better, participate more, and are less afraid of failure.”* Financial stability thus enabled a nurturing emotional climate where children’s self-esteem, discipline, and independence were actively cultivated. In contrast, as one father from Lahore observed, *“Money gives peace of mind; when you don’t worry about bills, you can focus on your children.”* Such testimonies highlight how economic security enhances both

parental attentiveness and children's educational engagement, producing broader developmental benefits beyond academics.

Conversely, families from lower socioeconomic backgrounds described ongoing struggles to meet even the most basic educational needs. A laborer from Gujranwala lamented, *"I want to send my son to private school, but the fees are more than my monthly income."* Similarly, a working mother from rural Gujrat shared, *"I work in fields all day; when I return home, I barely have the energy to check their homework."* Financial stress often translated into emotional exhaustion and reduced parental involvement, weakening the parent child bond and lowering children's academic motivation. Many parents voiced painful trade-offs between survival and schooling. As a mother from Gujranwala explained, *"We want to buy books, but sometimes food and bills come first. Education becomes a luxury."* Teachers also observed that *"children from poor families come to school hungry or anxious; they can't focus on lessons."* These cumulative challenges limited not only access to quality education but also the emotional security necessary for personality development. As one respondent poignantly summarized, *"Poverty doesn't just stop education it takes away children's dreams."* Overall, the findings underscore that income and resource allocation are decisive factors shaping children's academic trajectories, emotional resilience, and self-concept. While financial stability empowers parents to invest in holistic and conscious childrearing, economic hardship constrains both opportunity and optimism, perpetuating cycles of inequality in Punjab's evolving social fabric.

Theme 4: Urban-Rural Parenting Culture and Developmental Patterns

The study highlighted marked contrasts between urban and rural parenting cultures across Lahore, Gujrat, and Gujranwala, reflecting broader differences in social norms, economic resources, and family organization. Urban nuclear families predominantly practiced performance-oriented parenting, emphasizing academic success, self-reliance, and individual achievement. A professional mother from Lahore explained, *"We encourage our children to be independent; success today means learning to compete, not to depend."* Another parent added, *"I want my children to solve problems on their own; this is how they will survive in the city."* These approaches foster ambition, analytical thinking, and adaptability, preparing children for the competitive demands of urban life. However, participants and educators noted that such parenting sometimes created emotional distance. A teacher from Lahore observed, *"City children are confident but often distant from parents; they don't share their struggles at home."* Long work hours and high academic expectations limited opportunities for shared family experiences, revealing a trade-off between performance focus and emotional bonding.

In contrast, rural and semi-rural extended families emphasized collective upbringing, moral guidance, and community-oriented values. Elders, especially grandparents, played a significant role in nurturing children's moral and emotional development. An adolescent boy from Gujrat shared, *"My grandmother tells us stories of honesty and patience; we learn from her how to live with respect."* Similarly, a mother from a semi-urban household remarked, *"We teach our children to care for neighbors and family first; success will come later."* Such practices cultivated empathy, gratitude, and a strong sense of belonging, even in contexts of material scarcity. Teachers also observed complementary strengths in rural parenting: *"Village children cooperate better, are calmer, and show more*

patience, even under stress." Urban and rural models, therefore, offered different but interlinked developmental advantages urban families promoted cognitive flexibility, goal orientation, and independence, while rural households reinforced emotional stability, moral consciousness, and social cohesion. Collectively, the findings suggest that integrating the strengths of both parenting cultures could provide a more balanced approach to child development, fostering intellectual growth alongside emotional and ethical resilience in Punjab's diverse social landscape.

Theme: 5 Intergenerational Role Modeling and Moral Formation

The study highlighted that intergenerational influence, particularly through parents and grandparents, serves as a cornerstone of moral and personality development among children and adolescents in Punjab. Elders were consistently viewed as more than caregivers; they embodied values such as patience, respect, perseverance, and integrity through their daily behaviors. An adolescent boy from Gujrat reflected, *"My grandfather never gets angry when we make mistakes; he just tells us stories about honesty and forgiveness. I try to follow that."* Similarly, a mother from Lahore explained, *"I try to live the lessons I want my children to learn; they watch everything we do."* These narratives illustrate that moral education in Punjabi families is largely experiential, transmitted through observation and imitation rather than formal instruction, emphasizing the power of lived example in shaping character.

Participants frequently highlighted the significance of observing elders' emotional regulation, empathy, and conflict-resolution strategies. A young woman from Lahore noted, *"I saw my mother helping our neighbor even when we had little ourselves. That taught me what kindness really means."* Positive role modeling fostered emotional stability, intrinsic motivation, and respect for others, whereas exposure to inconsistent or negative behaviors, such as aggression or favoritism, undermined trust and emotional security. One participant from Gujranwala observed, *"When elders fight in front of us, we stop listening to their advice. It feels like they don't practice what they preach."* Grandparents, in particular, were pivotal in transmitting moral values through storytelling, prayer, and daily demonstrations of composure, as a 17-year-old student reflected, *"When I see my grandfather pray calmly during hard times, I remind myself to stay patient in exams or failures."* Overall, these findings underscore that intergenerational role modeling in Punjab functions as a relational and experiential form of socialization, blending traditional ethical teachings with contemporary life challenges. By observing and internalizing elders' behaviors, children cultivate emotional discipline, resilience, and moral identities that guide both personality development and educational perseverance.

Theme 6: Cultural and Religious Narratives in Parenting

The study revealed that cultural and religious frameworks are deeply interwoven into parenting practices across all three districts of Punjab. Parents frequently used faith-based narratives, Quranic teachings, and folk stories to instill virtues such as honesty, humility, patience, and discipline. An adolescent boy from Gujrat explained, *"My father reminds us through Quranic verses that being truthful and kind is better than scoring high marks."* Similarly, a mother from Lahore shared, *"I tell my children stories from our culture and faith every night so they learn respect and kindness before learning anything else."* These narratives provided children with moral direction, emotional stability, and ethical grounding,

demonstrating that cultural and religious storytelling remains a central vehicle for personality development and character formation in Punjabi households.

However, participants also highlighted tensions between traditional moral codes and contemporary educational or social expectations. One 18-year-old student from Lahore remarked, *"My parents always say obedience is the biggest virtue, but sometimes I want to question things in class or discuss new ideas, and they see it as disrespect."* Despite these challenges, many youth recognized the resilience and coping skills cultivated through their religious upbringing. A student from Gujranwala reflected, *"Whenever I feel stressed, I remember my mother's stories about patience from the Prophet's life; it helps me stay calm."* Another participant added, *"Even when I face problems at school, remembering our elders' stories reminds me to act with honesty and patience."* These experiences suggest that while faith-based narratives reinforce moral and emotional development, children simultaneously navigate a dual exposure to modern rationalist education and media influences. Consequently, cultural and religious parenting in Punjab not only transmits ethical values but also functions as a mechanism for emotional regulation, requiring careful balance to encourage critical thinking, curiosity, and adaptive resilience in an evolving social landscape.

Theme 7: Family Cohesion, Togetherness, and Personality Formation

The study revealed that family cohesion and shared rituals play a critical role in nurturing emotional security, confidence, and personality development among children across Punjab. Practices such as communal meals, joint prayers, and shared leisure activities emerged as powerful symbolic acts that reinforced belonging and emotional bonding. A 16-year-old student from Lahore reflected, *"When we all sit for dinner, we share jokes and talk about our day; it makes me feel supported."* Similarly, a mother from Gujranwala noted, *"Even if we are busy, we make time every evening to talk with our children it keeps our family close."* These narratives indicate that cohesion is not merely about physical proximity but about creating intentional opportunities for connection, dialogue, and shared meaning, which collectively enhance children's sense of security and self-worth.

Participants emphasized that family togetherness serves as a buffer against academic stress, emotional isolation, and uncertainty. One student explained, *"When I feel close to my parents, I don't get scared of failure because I know they'll still believe in me."* Conversely, children from conflict-prone or fragmented households reported loneliness, lower confidence, and heightened emotional volatility. A 19-year-old from Gujrat shared, *"My parents fight often and don't talk much to us. I feel disconnected, like no one understands me."* These testimonies highlight how positive family interactions support resilience, emotional regulation, and coping strategies, while familial discord undermines personality formation. Overall, the findings suggest that family cohesion functions as a developmental resource ritual of togetherness provide stability, continuity, and predictability, fostering moral strength, interpersonal trust, and academic persistence. In families marked by unity and shared engagement, children cultivate emotional intelligence, a grounded sense of identity, and adaptive social skills qualities essential for both personal growth and educational success.

Conclusion

This qualitative study concludes that family relationships play a foundational role in shaping children's personality development in Punjab Province. The research reveals

that the emotional climate of the home centered on communication, affection, and parental involvement serves as the primary environment for the formation of self-confidence, empathy, and moral awareness. Families that foster open dialogue and supportive interactions create emotionally secure children who exhibit resilience, self-regulation, and social competence. Conversely, authoritarian parenting, emotional neglect, and rigid hierarchies hinder children's self-expression and confidence, leading to anxiety, low self-esteem, and dependent behavior. Thus, the family unit remains not only the first school of learning but also the central site of personality formation and moral growth.

At the same time, the study identifies several challenges that impede healthy personality development among children in Punjab. Economic inequality, unequal emotional labor, and deeply rooted gender norms often limit children's opportunities for balanced growth. Large families and financial stress reduce the quality of parental attention, while patriarchal traditions reinforce gender-based restrictions on emotional expression and autonomy. Many children, particularly girls, face unequal expectations that shape their sense of identity and self-worth. Moreover, the pressures of academic achievement sometimes overshadow emotional nurturing, leaving children ill-equipped to manage stress and relationships effectively. These interconnected barriers illustrate that family-based development is not only psychological but also shaped by broader cultural and structural realities.

In conclusion, strengthening family relationships is essential for fostering well-rounded personality development in children. Promoting conscious and empathetic parenting, encouraging shared decision-making, and nurturing emotional intelligence within families can create environments where children feel valued and understood. Policy measures that support parental education, family counseling, and gender-sensitive awareness can further enhance family cohesion and emotional health. When families balance traditional moral values with modern emotional understanding, they lay the groundwork for confident, empathetic, and socially responsible individuals. Ultimately, a strong, emotionally connected family serves as the cornerstone of both individual development and social progress in Punjab's evolving cultural landscape.

Recommendations

The findings of this study underscore the importance of strengthening family relationships as a foundation for both children's personality development and educational achievement in Punjab Province. Parents should be supported in adopting emotionally responsive and participatory parenting approaches that encourage communication, empathy, and self-expression. Awareness programs, particularly in rural and low-income areas, can help parents understand the long-term benefits of emotional support, positive discipline, and balanced authority in nurturing confident, self-regulated, and academically motivated children. Parental education initiatives should emphasize that personality growth and learning outcomes are deeply interconnected children who feel emotionally secure and valued tend to perform better academically and socially.

Secondly, schools must act as key partners in promoting holistic child development by strengthening the home school relationship. Regular parent teacher conferences, parental training workshops, and collaborative learning programs can foster trust and

mutual understanding. Teachers should be equipped with skills to recognize the influence of family environments on student behavior, motivation, and performance. School-based counseling and mentorship programs can bridge the emotional and academic needs of students, ensuring that both personality traits such as resilience, responsibility, and empathy and scholastic skills such as self-discipline and persistence are cultivated simultaneously. A coordinated effort between educators and families will create environments conducive to emotional stability and academic excellence.

At the policy level, comprehensive strategies are needed to reduce socioeconomic and gender disparities that limit children's educational opportunities and psychological growth. Governmental and non-governmental organizations should implement family support programs that enhance parental literacy, economic stability, and gender equality within households. Financial aid for low-income families, parental education incentives, and flexible working arrangements can reduce stress and allow more time for parental involvement. Gender-sensitive campaigns should also promote equal educational aspirations for boys and girls while encouraging fathers to engage more actively in nurturing and academic guidance. By addressing structural barriers such as poverty and traditional gender hierarchies, policies can create more equitable family environments that support children's intellectual and emotional development.

Finally, future interventions and research should adopt an integrative, culturally grounded framework that recognizes the dual importance of academic and personal growth. Initiatives that blend traditional moral education with modern pedagogical approaches can strengthen both learning outcomes and socio-emotional competencies. Programs that encourage storytelling, family reading activities, and shared learning experiences can enhance moral reasoning alongside academic curiosity. By combining Punjab's rich cultural and religious traditions with evidence-based family and educational practices, policymakers, educators, and parents can together cultivate a generation of students who are not only academically accomplished but also emotionally balanced, ethical, and socially responsible individuals.

Note: This research article is derived from my PhD dissertation titled "A sociological analysis of the affects of family relationships on children's personality development and their educational achievements in Punjab Province, Pakistan".

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