

The Role of Maternal and Paternal Involvement in Shaping Social Competence in School-Aged Children

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Abstract:

The complex link between parental participation and the maturation of children's social skills is the subject of this study. The ability to communicate effectively, build rapport, and interact with others is called social competency. For a child's development and success in the future, it is essential. This study employs a qualitative documentary research approach. One way that mothers assist their children develop emotional intelligence and empathy is by engaging in nurturing behaviours, providing emotional support, and communicating with them in an empathic manner. Dads are involved, it's common for them to encourage their kids to be assertive and learn to resolve conflicts via play, problem-solving, and establishing boundaries. There are many facets to the complicated and multi-faceted role that parents play in creating their children's social competence once they enter school. Each parent brings their own unique and complimentary contributions to the table. In order to help parents, educators, and lawmakers promote children's healthy social development, highlighted several important results and consequences.

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received: 10 August 2025

Received in revised form
20 August 2025

Accepted 29 August 2025

Citation: Rahaman. M., (2025)
"The Role of Maternal and
Paternal Involvement in Shaping
Social Competence in School-
Aged Children", *Pen and
Prosperity*, Vol. 2, Issue. 3,
September 2025.

Keywords: Maternal, Paternal, Social Competence, School Going Children, Involvement.

1. Introduction:

Developmental psychologists have long been interested in studying the ways in which parents impact their children's social competence while they are school-aged. A child's well-being, academic performance, and overall success in life are all directly impacted by their level of social competence, which may be defined as their capacity to get along with people and successfully handle difficult social circumstances. It sets the stage for lifelong adaptive functioning, positive relationships, and emotional control. Our research here focusses on the separate but related a child's social skills are mostly shaped by their parents before they join school. There are many influences on a child's social development, but parents are often considered to have the most influence on their children's behaviour, outlook, and competence in this area. Additional research is needed to address the many methods parents are expected to help their children acquire social skills. This research acknowledges that parental engagement patterns might differ in different cultural, socioeconomic, and family situations. Based on these variations, it seems that parental participation may impact how a kid develops socially. Consequently, this study's overarching goal is to dissect the impact of parents, both independently and in combination with other contextual variables. Everyone concerned needs a greater grasp of the theoretical significance and real-world consequences of parental and educator engagement in their

children's social competence development. Politicians, parents, and teachers all fall into this category. Results from this research may guide initiatives in education, family interventions, and parent programs that help school-aged children grow socially and emotionally. Moreover, the larger conversation around gender roles, parenting equity, and children's well-being in today's culture where social skills are formed.

1.1. Background of the Study:

A child's social competence includes their capacity to adjust to new social situations, make and keep friends, and handle interactions with people appropriately. Words of encouragement, acts of kindness, and open dialogue are hallmarks of this kind of involvement. Strong ties with children develop between mothers and their young because mothers often take the lead in caring for others. Emotional regulation skills, social cognition, and empathy are more often shown in children whose mothers are actively involved in their lives from a young age. According to Ainsworth et al. (1978), a kid's attachment to their mother is shaped by her responsiveness and warmth, which helps the youngster grow socially. While the role of mothers in their children's social skill development has long been acknowledged, the role of dads has just now come to light. Children whose dads were involved were more likely to take part in activities that fostered curiosity, independence, and critical thinking, according to research by Pleck (2010). Reason being, fathers teach their sons to be self-reliant, confident, and to take measured risks as they mature. Many issues, however, concerning parental influence on children's social competence have not yet found satisfactory solutions. Cultural, economic, and family structure characteristics impact the relative quantities of parental participation, according to researchers (Cabrera et al., 2018). Consequently, studying how these differences impact kids' social development is crucial. Additional challenges to studying parental involvement stem from the ever-changing nature of gender roles in households and neighbourhoods. Research on how modern parents shape their children's social competence is very relevant in light of the ongoing transformation of conventional gender roles. In order to advocate for more fair parenting practices and improve children's social results, it is helpful to understand these links. Influencing the development of social competence in school-aged children are the responsibility of both parents in the home. In light of current knowledge on parenting, gender roles, and the well-being of children in modern society, this study intends to add to it by exploring the distinct and interrelated ways parents mould their children's social capacities, all the while bearing contextual factors in mind.

1.2. Statement of the Problem:

A child's social competence—their capacity to adjust to different social situations, form friendships, and manage social interactions well—is crucial to their healthy growth and development. The importance of the home environment on children's social competence development at school age has been highlighted in many research. In this environment, everyone agrees that parents' engagement is crucial. Few studies have looked at how both parents may affect their children's social competence, even as many have looked at how parental participation affects it alone. The dynamics of contemporary families may be better understood by looking at how parental involvement and children's social results are affected by shifts in conventional gender roles. Initiatives to improve parenting practices, family interventions, and educational programs for school-aged children may be guided by a better understanding of the varied roles that parents play in their children's social competence. To promote fair parenting practices and enhance children's well-being, it could be helpful to get a greater knowledge of these interactions. Although the majority of studies have concentrated on young children, parental participation may have an impact on social competence far into puberty and beyond. To better understand how family dynamics impact social development, it would be helpful to study the long-term impacts of parental participation. Thus the study entitled as “The Role of Maternal and Paternal Involvement in Shaping Social Competence in School-Aged Children”.

1.3. Need and Significance of the Study:

By looking at how parents affect their children's social competence development, this research hopes to fill a gap in our understanding. Previous research has often revealed both the joint and unique consequences of parental engagement; however, this study intends to provide light on the former by studying parental tasks independently. It is important to recognise that cultural, economic, and family circumstances influence the degree to which mothers and fathers are involved. Research on parental involvement and the social effects on children is crucial in light of changing gender norms and parenting styles in today's culture. Gender norms are changing, and this study looks at how that has affected parenting styles. Legislators, teachers, and parents might all feel the effects of this study's conclusions right now. The results of this research might have real-world implications for the health of families and children. As a result, it adds fuel to the fire of discussions about modern family dynamics and parental equality. Its value goes beyond the academic sphere as well.

1.4. Objectives of the Study:

O1: To explore the specific contributions of maternal involvement to a child's social competence, with a focus on nurturing behaviors, emotional support, and communication.

O2: To investigate the distinct roles of paternal involvement in fostering social competence, emphasizing activities that encourage exploration, independence, and problem-solving skills.

O3: To analyse the parenting equality by shedding light on a equitable distribution of parenting responsibilities on children's social development.

2. The Review of Related Literature:

Sun, Y., Lam, C. B., & Chung, K. K. H. (2021). An investigation on the connections between mothers' reactions to their children's distress and the development of their children's social competence throughout time. Results showed that, in theory, children's individual traits interact with parental socialisation strategies to influence their growth and development. Important real-world consequences of the study include the need to teach young Chinese people how to express themselves appropriately and the need of achieving and sustaining emotional stability.

Kim, J., & Lee, J. (2021). Children in both countries whose moms reported higher levels of stress at the age of three had fewer opportunities to learn at home, which hindered the development of social skills by the time they were school-aged. We also discovered cultural differences: in Korea, paternal engagement greatly reduced the detrimental impacts of stress on mothers during parenting, but in the US, this shock absorber function was performed by fathers' mental health, namely the absence of depression.

Koszalka-Silka, A., Korcz, A., & Wiza, A. (2021). Examining how an adventure-based physical education program affected the confidence and social skills of male adolescents. There is some evidence that the adventure education (AE) program can help teenagers build the social and assertiveness skills necessary for success in today's modern world by incorporating physical activity into their school day.

Jones, K. M., Champion, P. R., & Woodward, L. J. (2013). Competence in social interaction among preschoolers delivered at a high rate of premature birth. Behavioural and emotional adjustment, emotion regulation, positive peer play, and synchronous social interaction were all worse for VPT-born children compared to their FT counterparts. Relationships with mum and dad. Extreme preterm, severe cerebral white matter abnormalities, low socioeconomic status in the family, and bad parenting and high levels of mother anxiety were all factors that predicted low social competence in the VPT group.

Ambrose, H. (2013). The role of maternal emotional socialisation and the coordination of maternal-child interactions in the maturation of children's capacity for self-regulation and social competence. Little was found in support of moderation models that investigated the interplay between mother-child connections, bond strength, and children's emotional regulation and social competence. The findings may inform the development of interventions and prevention strategies for emotional and social competence impairments in children by shedding light on the role of parent-child interactions in this area.

2.1. Research Gap:

“The Role of Maternal and Paternal Involvement in Shaping Social Competence in School-Aged Children” has received less attention over the years of research. Consequently, researchers looked at issues raised in such a way.

3. Methodology of the Study:

The research strategy for this project is a qualitative documentary one. The researcher will utilise primary and secondary sources for this investigation. According to the research, parental engagement varies between cultures. In addition, it delves into the connection between parental participation and the enhancement of social and emotional learning and abilities in children who are of school age. A multistage filtering process allowed the selection of sources that support the conceptual, cultural, and academic contexts of the topic. In particular, the review's methodology included a systematic search of databases such as ERIC, Google Scholar, EBSCOhost, and others pertaining to education. A predefined set of inclusion and exclusion criteria was also used, with a focus on references that had been peer-reviewed.

4. Analysis and Discussion:

4.1. Pertaining to Objective 1

O₁: To explore the specific contributions of maternal involvement to a child's social competence, with a focus on nurturing behaviors, emotional support, and communication.

The foundation of secure attachment relationships, according to Bowlby's attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969), is the emotional bond that forms between a child and their primary caretaker, who is usually their mother. When children are able to establish secure bonds, it boosts their self-esteem and prepares them to interact well with others in the future. Maternal involvement includes nurturing actions, which are crucial to creating a secure and reassuring caregiving environment. Examples of nurturing behaviours include creating a safe and loving space, showing physical affection, using soothing touch, and cuddling. These acts have a dual purpose, say Ainsworth et al. (1978): first, they help the mother feel more connected to her kid, and second, they make the baby feel emotionally secure. The development of social competence is dependent on children's ability to approach new social situations with confidence and trust, both of which are enhanced when they have a solid feeling of emotional stability. For children to grow up with empathy and emotional intelligence, their moms must be involved, especially when it comes to offering emotional support. Eisenberg et al. (1998) found that parents' emotional expressiveness and attention were critical in helping their children develop empathy and prosocial conduct. A child's ability to identify, label, and manage their own emotions, as well as the emotional support they get from their mothers, are the building blocks of emotional competence, which is necessary for social competence. The capacity to communicate effectively is another aspect of parental involvement that substantially benefits a child's social development. Communicating verbally is only half the battle; the other half is listening carefully and fostering open dialogue (Dix et al., 2004). The way moms engage with their children teaches them valuable lessons about social norms, ethics, and expectations. Now, researcher examine their particular contributions:

Nurturing Behaviors:

Emotional Bonding: Physical touch, snuggling, and calming are examples of maternal nurturing behaviours that develop a deep emotional connection with the child. The infant develops trust and emotional stability as a result of this connection, which serves as a stable foundation from which to explore the world. Building strong connections with others requires this emotional groundwork.

Attachment Security: One factor in the development of stable bonds in young children is the caring behaviours shown by mothers. Because they have a firm grasp on trust and emotional stability, children who experience stable attachment are better able to grow into socially competent adults. In social settings, they are more able to control their nervousness and tension.

Emotional Support:

Emotion Regulation: Maternal emotional support helps children learn to recognize, express, and regulate their emotions.

Empathy Development: Maternal emotional support fosters empathy in children. Through empathetic responses to their own emotions, mothers teach children to empathize with others' feelings and perspectives. Empathy is a cornerstone of effective communication and forming positive relationships.

Communication:

Language Development: Maternal communication, including talking, listening, and engaging in conversations with the child, contributes to language development. Effective verbal communication is essential for expressing thoughts, emotions, and needs in social interactions. Language skills lay the foundation for effective social communication.

Social Learning: Maternal communication also serves as a medium for social learning. Mothers often impart social norms, values, and expectations through conversations. Children learn social etiquettes, problem-solving strategies, and conflict resolution skills from maternal guidance and modeling.

Active Listening: Maternal involvement includes active listening, which helps children feel heard and valued. This skill encourages children to express themselves openly and helps them develop active listening and empathy, which are vital for successful social interactions.

Thus, maternal involvement significantly contributes to a child's social competence through nurturing behaviors, emotional support, and communication. Nurturing behaviors establish a foundation of trust and emotional security, emotional support helps children regulate emotions and develop empathy, and communication fosters language development, social learning, and active listening skills. Together, these maternal contributions create a nurturing and supportive environment that equips children with the social skills necessary for positive relationships and effective social interactions.

4.2. Pertaining to Objective 2:

O2: To investigate the distinct roles of paternal involvement in fostering social competence, emphasizing activities that encourage exploration, independence, and problem-solving skills.

The unique contribution that fathers make to their children's maturation and success in life has recently received more recognition as a result of the shifting paradigms in contemporary parenting. The traditional role of mothers was to care for their children, whereas the traditional role of men was to provide financially. This preconception about men and women is still prevalent nowadays. The traditional view of parents' roles

in their children's development has been shifting in recent years, with more focus on the many ways in which fathers may contribute to their children's success. The value of parents being involved in their children's education and growth has been stressed by many scholars. Dads, for instance, give unique opportunities for their children's development via the play-based interactions they have with them, which often foster exploration and the use of reasoning abilities (Lamb, 2010). Since the involvement of fathers has a significant effect on children's socioemotional development, it is essential to research the specific components of paternal influence (Cabrera and Tamis-LeMonda, 2013). Parents who are involved in their children's lives have a profound impact on their children's social competence. They often prioritise activities that foster curiosity, autonomy, and the ability to solve problems on their own. We will now examine the separate functions they perform:

Encouraging Exploration:

Physical Activities: Fathers often engage in physical activities, such as outdoor play, sports, and exploration-oriented outings with their children. These experiences encourage children to explore their environment, take risks, and develop physical and spatial awareness.

Hands-On Learning: Paternal involvement tends to emphasize hands-on learning experiences. Fathers may involve their children in activities like building, fixing, or experimenting, which promote problem-solving and critical thinking skills. These activities encourage children to explore different approaches to challenges and foster a growth mindset.

Risk-Taking and Confidence: Encouraging exploration may involve exposing children to controlled risks, which can help them learn to assess situations and make informed decisions. This experience can boost a child's self-esteem and confidence, making them more willing to engage in social interactions and try new experiences.

Promoting Independence:

Autonomy and Responsibility: As their children get older, dads often urge them to take on more responsibility and make age-appropriate decisions. Children learn to be responsible for their own acts and to think for themselves via this process of developing autonomy. The ability to work independently is fundamental for social competency because it gives youngsters the self-assurance they need to handle new social circumstances.

Self-Efficacy: The conviction in one's own abilities to complete tasks and overcome obstacles is known as self-efficacy, and it is enhanced when a child's father is involved in activities that encourage independence. Positive outlooks and confidence in one's abilities characterise social interactions among children who score high on the self-efficacy scale.

Developing Problem-Solving Skills:

Critical Thinking: Fathers often involve their children in pursuits that need analytical and logical thinking. Activities such as puzzles, strategic games, or group discussions may help kids develop skills in critical thinking, problem solving, and decision-making. You can use these mental abilities to solve problems in social situations.

Conflict Resolution: Paternal involvement can provide opportunities for children to learn conflict resolution skills by modeling and guiding them through disputes or disagreements. These experiences help children understand different perspectives, negotiate, and find mutually acceptable solutions—skills vital for maintaining positive social relationships.

Communication:

Problem-solving often involves effective communication, which fathers can emphasize. Fathers who actively listen to their children's concerns and encourage open and honest dialogue teach children valuable communication skills that enhance their ability to navigate social conflicts and build positive relationships.

Thus, paternal involvement fosters social competence in children by emphasizing activities that encourage exploration, independence, and problem-solving skills. Fathers often provide opportunities for hands-on learning, autonomy-building, and critical thinking, which equip children with the confidence, autonomy, and cognitive abilities necessary for successful social interactions. These distinct roles complement the nurturing and emotionally supportive roles often associated with maternal involvement, contributing to a well-rounded development of social competence in children.

4.3. Pertaining to Objective 3:

O3: *To analyse the parenting equality by shedding light on equitable distribution of parenting responsibilities on children's social development.*

The concept of parenting equality, characterized by the equitable distribution of parenting responsibilities between mothers and fathers, has gained increasing recognition and significance in contemporary society. Parenting equality challenges traditional gender roles and promotes the idea that both parents should actively engage in raising and nurturing their children. This shift in parenting dynamics has far-reaching implications, particularly concerning children's social development. As psychologist Erik Erikson famously noted, children undergo a series of psychosocial stages of development, with the successful resolution of each stage paving the way for healthy psychological growth (Erikson, 1950).

During the formative years of childhood and adolescence, when individuals are still figuring out who they are and how to fit in with the world, they undergo a substantial portion of this growth. When it comes to influencing children's social development at this crucial era, the fair division of parental tasks is very essential. Beyond just splitting up caregiving duties, this method places an emphasis on providing emotional support, communicating, and being involved in a child's life. These changes present and emphasise the value of both parents in their children's life, challenging conventional wisdom about women's roles as main carers and dads' roles as secondary providers. The social development of children is profoundly affected by parenting equality, which entails an equal division of labour in raising children between parents. The idea behind this method is to have both parents do everything they can to help their children grow up healthy and happy. This article explains the ways in which parental equality affects the social development of children:

Positive Role Modelling: When both parents are actively engaged in parenting their children, children are exposed to more positive role models. There are examples of carers of both sexes talking to each other, solving difficulties, and settling disputes while they provide care. By allowing them to develop a more accepting and adaptable view of gender, this exposure may positively affect children's social interactions and relationships with their classmates. Gender norms and expectations are also better understood by them after going through this.

Psychological Health: Parents seem to get more emotional support from one another when they approach parenting on an equal footing. Having more carers a child may confide in improves their emotional and behavioural well-being. Kids whose parents are there for them emotionally while they're growing up are more likely to exhibit resilience and stability, two social competency characteristics. As they see their parents' interactions and how they resolve conflicts, children gain important social skills. By dividing up the household tasks, parents teach their children new ways to interact socially and resolve conflicts. Children

may gain valuable life skills from this experience, such as how to speak clearly, understand and respect the feelings of others, and handle disagreements amicably.

Social Equity and Gender Equality: By emphasising that caring for one's family and children is not primarily a function of one's gender, fair parenting practices support the idea of gender equality at the family level. Children whose parents model equality at home are more likely to grow up with a more equitable perspective on life. Aiming for gender equality and social justice instead. Because of this, individuals may be more open-minded and respectful in their interactions with others.

Time and Attention: Children are guaranteed sufficient time and attention from both parents when responsibilities are divided properly. Such well-rounded care may be beneficial to a child's emotional well-being and feeling of self-worth. It is more probable that a child will exhibit outstanding social behaviours if they get unconditional love and support from both parents. Finally, the social development of children is significantly influenced by parenting equity, which is defined as an equal division of caring duties between parents. It helps youngsters develop a healthy sense of self-worth, promotes gender equality, improves their ability to communicate and resolve conflicts, and lays the groundwork for healthy relationships. Better family dynamics, increased social competency, and general well-being may result from bringing attention to the significance of parenting equity.

5. Conclusion:

There are many facets to the complicated and multi-faceted role that parents play in creating their children's social competence once they enter school. Each parent brings their own unique and complimentary contributions to the table. In order to help parents, educators, and lawmakers promote healthy social development in children, this research has highlighted several important results and consequences. A child's social competency is greatly impacted by the level of participation of both its parents, according to the study. While dads are usually great at teaching their kids to solve problems and establish healthy boundaries, moms are usually great at offering emotional support and loving. It is critical to acknowledge and value these unique contributions and to promote active participation from both parents in order to optimise a child's social development. In addition, the level of parental participation is more important than the amount. Spending more time with children has less of an effect on their social competency than having consistent, good, and responsive interactions with them. A home that fosters empathy, active listening, and open communication may help children grow socially and emotionally. Additionally, the significance of shedding conventional gender norms in parenting is highlighted by this research. Not only does it help kids develop social competency, but it also encourages parents to take turns playing and learning new things with their kids, which is great for everyone's sense of family duty and gender equality. Taking a societal view, the results highlight the value of funding parental support services, family-friendly legislation, and parenting skill education. We can help ensure the prosperity and happiness of generations to come by providing parents with the tools they need to be active participants in their children's education. In the end, the way social competence is shaped by parental participation is a process that is always changing and adapting. Cultural, economical, and personal elements all have a role. The need of ongoing research and interventions to support healthy social development in school-aged children cannot be overstated if we are to secure a brighter future for everyone.

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