

## **Adolescents' Perception of parenting as related to family environment in defence officers families in India**

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**ABSTRACT :** *The defence services have various service related strengths and stressors which are likely to influence the adolescents' perception of parenting and Family environment. The present study was thus carried out on 240 Indian defence officers' families to understand Adolescents' Perception of parenting as related to family environment. Results were analysed by using Pearson's correlation and factor analysis. Results showed clearly that the adolescents perceived mothers' child rearing practices as one unit specially in terms of behavioural aspects of child rearing like academics, recreation, nutrition, demonstration of love, personality development, health and puberty, thus supporting earlier findings that various aspects of parenting work in consonance with each other and influence adolescent outcomes. The II Factor reflected aspects of family environment such as independence, recreation orientation, cohesion and expressiveness, clustering together. These dimensions related to fostering autonomy and family relationships of the adolescents in defence families. These dimensions also indicated the degree of commitment and support family members provided for one another and the extent to which they felt encouraged to express their feelings directly. Three aspects of child rearing practices related to social status and prestige of adolescents like economic, social and clothes along with the total scores emerged in the III Factor. In the IV Factor, dimensions of family environment, namely moral orientation, organisation and competitive framework emerged as a separate factor and related to family maintenance and effective functioning of adolescents within the family as well as the society.*

*Adolescents' perception of fathers' parenting showed that Total scores of child rearing practices were heavily loaded and clustered with all the other sub variables and gave one cohesive factor. This finding reiterates the fact that parenting of both the fathers and mothers seems to be perceived in totality of their child rearing behaviours related to all aspects of parenting as a unit.*

*Family environment was splintered and its different dimensions emerged in the II and III Factors. This clubbing of sub variables of family environment in the second and third factor showed the same trend of splinting as in the case of perception of mothers, showing that adolescents'*

*perception of family environment did not vary with perception of mothers' or fathers' parenting individually. The perception of family environment seemed to be the result of how parenting was perceived as a whole.*

**Key words**—Adolescents, Defence families, family environment, parenting , perception

## I INTRODUCTION

Human development literature is replete with evidence that child rearing practices and family environment are the key influences on the adolescent's development and well-being, and that parental love, attention, stability and consistency in the home are tremendously important in determining what happens to him/her. Parental occupation has a definite impact on the manner in which family members relate to each other and the way, in which parents cope with the developmental, educational and recreational needs of their adolescents.

### **Parenting as related to family environment**

The family and especially the parenting play an extremely important role in the multifaceted development and adjustment of adolescents. Various theorists have reported the influence of parenting practices on the personality characteristics [1-4]. The relationship between behaviour of children, child rearing practices as well as parental attitude has often been examined.

It is reported that in the family, each family member influences and is influenced by the other members [5], thus producing a family environment which is determined by the interpersonal relationships among family members. A healthy family characterised by emphasis on personal growth, cohesion and organisation, is related to psychological well being of adolescents and a positive perception of parenting and family environment [6].

Studies done in India have however focussed mainly on the effect of parenting on personality traits of adolescents such as antisocial behaviour [7], feelings of insecurity [8], achievement orientation [9] and social behaviour [10]. Background variables such as family size, type sex of the child, birth order etc have also been studied in relation to maternal acceptance and rejection (11-13). Mothers' parenting as related to her employment, education, culture and caste [14-15] has also been extensively studied. However, hardly any documented research on adolescent - parent perception of child rearing practices as related to family environment is available. Since the actual behaviour, rather than the beliefs or attitudes of the parents is likely to be related to the family environment experienced and perceived by the family members, an effort was made in this study to examine the relation between perception of parenting practices and family environment.

The Indian armed forces are amongst the largest in the world. Review of literature related to military family life in India indicates that most studies have been carried out in the areas directly related to operational or medical aspects. Not much work related to perception of parenting and family environment or its relationship has been carried out so far. As a group, adolescents and parents in the defence services experience a unique environment and are confronted with stresses of service life such

as mobility, frequent deployments, resultant family separations, and life threatening jobs. These stresses can influence the parenting practices as well as the family environment. Thus, the present research work was undertaken to examine the relationship of perception of parenting and family environment in defence officer's families. Understanding of this relationship can play an important role in providing suitable inputs for strengthening parenting skills and family environment of defence families. Feedback and discussion of the results with policy makers, educators, parents and adolescents can help create awareness of important issues related to parenting and family environment in defence services and develop strategies to help deal effectively with them.

### **Defence adolescents' perception of family environment**

Defence community has a different culture with its own social norms, beliefs, behaviours and ceremonies. Families are expected to be as committed and dedicated to military lifestyle and mission as the defence officer. Active spousal and family involvement in the culture is viewed as a sign of commitment and adaptation to military life [16]. Families in defence are likely to show authoritative style of parenting where individuals are loved, supported, and given the freedom to express their opinions. Defence officers generally show discipline and high moral standards. Research studies endorse that children's moral thoughts are influenced by parental moral values [17], and that model moral behaviour and thinking of parents, promotes moral development of children [18]. Thus, discipline and the high moral standards of defence parents are likely to percolate down even to the children as they grow up in defence family environment. Good disciplining patterns and friendly communication with adolescents, common in defence families, has been linked to higher level of satisfaction with the family [19].

### **Perception of family environment as related to child rearing practices**

Child rearing practices have tremendous influence on the nature of interactions between adolescents and their parents. Review of literature shows that greater cohesiveness and freedom of expression can be seen in the family environment where parents are authoritative, warm, affectionate and understanding. Conflicts in family environment are marked where there is authoritarian parenting, disparity and inadequate communication between the family members [20-23]. Nurturance, socialization, income support, long-term care, good communication and negotiation, indicate a healthy family environment. Conflicts are settled through rational discussion and compromise, instead of open hostility and conflict. Thus perception of child rearing practices is likely to be positively correlated with various dimensions of family environment.

### **Influence of frequent relocations on adolescents in defence families**

School and home stability is not descriptive of the life style of adolescents whose parents are in the defence services [24]. Research studies have been done to see the impact of frequent moves on school performance and role of the family. Studies indicate both negative as well as positive outcomes in academic performance of the adolescents as discussed below;

#### **Negative outcomes**

Frequent moves are stressful experiences that compromise academic achievement and appropriate school behaviour. Because of frequent moves, defence adolescents may experience anxiety caused by upheavals from familiar surroundings and separation from friends which may result in lower grades and an unwillingness to participate in extracurricular school activities [25-26]. It is generally seen that children of defence families who face relocation as frequently as every three years are academically disadvantaged because transitions from one school to another may result in being retained in the same grade [27]. Besides, adolescents are expected to make rapid adjustments to new environments, routines, teachers, friends, and curricula. Difficulties arise when these adolescents do not meet the standard expectations for 'fitting in' and 'doing well' in school. In some cases, individuals may be at risk of failing in school and of adopting inappropriate ways of coping with change. The tensions that arise in defence families because of adolescents' antisocial behaviour may affect significantly defence personnel's decision to quit the services. However, such outcomes are not always predictable.

### **Positive outcomes**

Although it could be assumed that students who have experienced many school transitions may be less successful academically, some research studies suggest that these adolescents have never the less learned to adjust to new schools and achieve academically just as well as adolescents who have not made such transitions [28].

Pittman & Bowen's, 1994 study, examined the adjustment patterns of the adolescent children of Air Force service members. Their findings indicated that adolescent children of defence personnel do experience positive personal adjustment and adjustment to the environment, which are indicated by their academic success. The ability to adjust well may be explained by [29] strengths perspective which holds that individual's talents or competence, in addition to resources in the environment, can be used to reduce the negative consequences of stressful experiences. This perspective explains success of adolescents who attend several different schools from kindergarten through grade 12. Strobino (2000) [30], studied the characteristics, transitions, and school experiences of 6,382 children (ages 10 to 18) of defence personnel from all branches of the armed services. He noted that that despite an average of five school transitions, adolescents reported average and above - average grades in classes and ample participation in extracurricular school activities.

### **Parental support**

The literature provides clear and convincing evidence to demonstrate that adolescents whose parents are actively involved in school activities are more likely to succeed academically, than those whose parents do not [31-33]. Parental support is an important environmental factor that mediates the transition of the adolescent. The more often the parents get involved with adolescents at home and at school, the more likely they are to be successful in transition and in academic achievement [34-35]. Indicators of parental involvement include time spent with the adolescent talking about school programs, activities, and academics; time conversing with teachers; volunteering at the school; and attending school events [36-40]. Family linkage with the school and a supportive home environment

contributes to the integration of adolescents into new school environment and thus enhances their school success and defence parents have been seen to get actively involved in their children's school activities.

### **Influence of fathers' absence on adolescents in defence services**

Studies report that father absence can have adverse effects on socio - emotional aspect and adjustment of adolescents, yet social support network can moderate the negative influence of father absence on adolescents.

Amen et al., (1988)[41] did a review of literature and suggested that the factors which contributed to adjustment of adolescents to father absence in the defence services included, the wife's level of satisfaction with the defence service, stability of the parent's marriage, the mother's reaction to the father's absence, and level of community social support .

Findings from other studies indicate that father's absence can negatively influence behavioural adjustment and academic performance of the adolescents [42] .It can increase level of depression and anxiety in adolescents. Boys are more likely to experience increased aggressiveness, irritability, depression, and impulsiveness during deployment and younger children are found to be somewhat more vulnerable than adolescents, to the negative effects of the father's absence [43-44]. It is also reported that total length of father's absence rather than frequency of absence is more predictive of emotional instability, symptoms of depression and anxiety of the adolescents [43].

Separation from father as compared to his death is more detrimental to the mental health of the adolescents. However, the quality of the relationship with parents moderates the negative impact of separation. Adolescents from the separation group perceive more control, less support and being less cared for by their parents [45]. Ability to cope with a father absent situation is enhanced by the use of active coping mechanisms [46] . Emotion focused coping is most common. It is reported that those who use more social support show less acting-out behaviours [47]. Family attitudes and perceptions predict the response of adolescents to separation [48].

To understand relationship between child rearing practices and family environment in defence officers' families, where father absence is frequently experienced, the present study was undertaken with the following objectives.

### **Objectives of the paper**

1. To examine adolescents' perception of family environment as related to their perception of mothers' parenting.
2. To examine adolescents' perception of family environment as related to their perception of fathers' parenting.

## 11 METHOD

### Design of the study

The present study was conducted on 240 adolescents from officers' cadre of all the three wings of defence services i.e. Army, Navy and Air Force.

### Sampling Procedure

#### a) Selection of the Schools

The Army Wives Welfare Association (AWWA), Naval Wives Welfare Association (NAWWA) and Air Force Wives Welfare Association (AFWWA) were contacted so as to get support and willingness from the defence officer's families and schools for participating in this study.

Kendriya Vidyalayas and Army, Air Force and Naval public schools at Chandigarh, New Delhi and Mumbai in India, were visited and the principals explained the aims and objectives of the study. The implications and utility of the present work was also discussed. This helped in getting the necessary co-operation of the school authorities in sample selection and data collection.

#### b) Selection of the Respondents

A list of adolescent children of defence officers' families was prepared and a sample of 240 adolescents was short listed with 80 from each of the three wings of defence services. Equal number of boys and girls from each service was then selected randomly. Thus a sample of 120 girls and 120 boys in the age group of 11 to 18 yrs was selected. Families of selected sample were personally contacted and the nature of the study was explained to them. Their consent to participate willingly in the study was taken.

### Tools used in the study

The selection of tools was done keeping in mind the objectives of the study. Pre-testing of the tools was done on a sample of 20 adolescents (10 girls and 10 boys). Brief description of the tools is given below.

#### 1. Personal profile of the sample

A personal profile of the sample was obtained by the investigator on the perception of child rearing scale form.

#### 2. Perception of parent child interaction scale developed by Vidhu Mohan & Jaskiran Kaur (1989), modified by Kaur (1992)

This scale was used to measure the adolescents' perception of their mothers' and fathers' child rearing practices. This scale was preferred over the other tests of child rearing practices as the items of the scale related to the actual behaviour of the parents while interacting with their adolescents, rather than merely assessing their attitude towards the important aspects of parenting. The scale has a fairly well established reliability and validity.

This scale consisted of 40 items related to 10 behavioural indices of the interaction of adolescents with their parents. Parent - adolescent interaction in the following areas of child rearing was seen: Academic, Social, Economic, Recreation, Clothes, Puberty development, Demonstration of love,

Personality development, Health. There were four items in each area. The response was elicited on a five point scale and it varied from 'very often', 'quite often', 'moderately', 'seldom' and 'never' respectively. There was no time limit for this test. Scoring was done by assigning a score of 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 to the answers, so that each statement could get a minimum score of 1 and a maximum score of 5, according to the degree marked in terms of the response. Total individual score of each variable as well as the whole scale was calculated. Means and Standard deviations were computed Correlations were computed and factor analysis done for seeing relationship between parenting and family environment.

### **3. Family Environment Scale (FES) (Vohra, 1997) (Appendix II)**

Family environment of defence officers was determined by using Family Environment Scale (FES) developed by Vohra (1997). It is a self administered scale and is appropriate for use on ages of above 10 years and throughout adulthood. The tool has a fairly high validity and reliability. The scale contained 98 items pertaining to seven independent dimensions related to family environment viz, competitive framework, cohesion, expressiveness, independence, moral orientation, and organization and recreation orientation.

The raw scores were converted into standard scores with a ten point range. Separate norms were available for the adolescents and their parents. A range of scores as follows indicated high and extremely high family environment, average, or low and extremely low family environment:

- 8-10 High and extremely high scores
- 4-7 Average score.
- 1-3 Low and extremely low score.

The test-retest reliability, as measured by the author from several studies for the seven dimensions was .78 for independence; .79 for competitive framework; .80 for expression; .81 for organization; .82 for moral orientation; .82 for recreational orientation, and .89 for cohesion.

The factorial validity of this scale varied from .77 for expression; .79 for organization; .82 for independence; .83 for cohesion; and .84 for competitive framework.

#### **Data Analysis**

The data was analyzed by computing total scores, means and standard deviation. To examine the relationship between perception of parenting and family environment, Pearson's correlation was used. The results were further analysed by using factor analysis. Principal Component Analysis method was used for factor analysis and for rotation; Varimax with Kaiser Normalisation was used.

## **III.RESULTS**

### **Adolescents' perception of family environment as related to the perception of their mothers' parenting**

Inter correlations of adolescents' perception of their mothers' parenting and family environment were computed and are as shown in Table 1. Highly significant correlations were noted between the sub variables of child rearing practices scale and the total score of adolescents' perception of mothers' parenting. The total score of child rearing practices also showed high correlation with various

dimensions of family environment. However, correlation between the sub variables of child rearing practices and dimensions of family environment were not very significant. For example, health did not correlate with majority of the family environment sub variables or competitive framework did not show significant correlation with majority of the sub variables of child rearing practices.

**Table 1**

**Correlation Matrix of adolescents' perception of his mothers' child rearing practices and family environment**

	ACA	SOC	REC	ECO	NUT	CLO	PUB	D.O.L	P.D.	HEA	CF	CO	EX	IN	MO	OR	RO	Total	
ACA	1.00	.30**	.50**	.25**	.44**	.28**	.30**	.42**	.43**	.27**	.18	.33**	.30**	.24**	.15	.27**	.38**	.67**	
SOC		1.00	.27**	.36**	.33**	.42**	.18*	.19*	.30**	.11	.06	.17*	.20**	.34**	.01	.00	.27**	.55**	
REC			1.00	.22**	.48**	.33**	.24**	.32**	.43**	.28**	.07	.32**	.24**	.20**	.15*	.26**	.35**	.63**	
ECO				1.00	.33**	.47**	.22**	.30**	.43**	.24**	.05	.21**	.34**	.25**	.23**	.13	.15*	.60**	
NUT					1.00	.36**	.22**	.32**	.49**	.37**	.05	.20**	.25**	.14	.13	.09	.24**	.66**	
CLO						1.00	.19**	.30**	.44**	.27**	.12	.26**	.37**	.31**	.13	.12	.23**	.64**	
PUB							1.00	.26**	.32**	.19**	.04	.15*	.21**	.20**	.06	.14	.23**	.55**	
D.O.L								1.00	.5	.36**	.15*	.26**	.23**	.14	.11	.18**	.27**	.66**	
P.D.									1.00	.41**	.18*	.35**	.36**	.20**	.20**	.23**	.25**	.75**	
HEA										1.00	.13	.10	.12	-.03	.15*	.12	.10	.54**	
CF											1.00	.12	.10	.14*	.16*	.34**	.09	.17**	
CO												1.00	.52**	.34**	.21**	.32**	.46**	.38**	
EX													1.00	.43**	.18**	.25**	.37**	.42**	
IN														1.00	-.01	.20**	.38**	.33*	
MO															1.00	.24**	.10	.21**	
OR																1.00	.23**	.25**	
RO																	1.00	.40**	
Total																			1.00

\* Correlation is significant at .05 level (2-tailed)

\*\*Correlation is significant at .01 level (2-tailed)

**Factor analysis**

Factor analysis was carried out on the above given correlation matrix to find out if two sets of variables of child rearing practices and family environment were really related to each other and for delineating a distinct cluster of interrelated data as factors. Principal Component Analysis method was used for factor analysis and for rotation; Varimax with Kaiser Normalisation was used

To measure the percent of variance in each variable explained by all the factors, communalities were derived using principal component analysis. Eigen values were calculated. If the factor had a low Eigen value, then it was considered as contributing little to the explanation of variance in the variable and was ignored as redundant. Thus as shown in Table 2, 4 factors with higher Eigen values were extracted for adolescents' perception of their mothers' parenting.

Unrotated Component Matrix was computed as shown in Table 2. This defined the most general patterns of relationship in the data i.e. the factor loadings. Factor loadings are correlation coefficients between the variables and factors. Factor loadings above .6 are usually considered high and



below .4 as low. The factor loadings yielded two major clusters: **(1) Between the variables of child rearing practices and (2) Between the dimensions of family environment.**

**Table 2**

**Unrotated Component Matrix for adolescents' perception of mothers' parenting**

	Component					
	Eigen values	% of Variance	1	2	3	4
TOTAL	6.09	33.84	<b>.95</b>	.25	.00	.00
PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT	1.64	9.16	<b>.75</b>	.20	.11	.00
ACADEMIC	1.42	7.89	<b>.68</b>	.00	.11	.33
RECREATION	1.13	6.29	<b>.65</b>	.00	.00	-.32
NUTRITION	.97	5.42	<b>.64</b>	.33	.00	.10
CLOTHES	.88	4.90	<b>.64</b>	.00	.26	.36
DEMO. OF LOVE	.80	4.47	<b>.62</b>	.21	.17	.13
ECONOMIC	.67	3.72	<b>.58</b>	.14	.18	<b>.51</b>
EXPRESSIVENESS	.63	3.53	<b>.57</b>	<b>.43</b>	.12	.16
COHESION	.58	3.25	<b>.55</b>	<b>.51</b>	.00	.00
RECREATION ORIENTATION	.52	2.92	<b>.53</b>	<b>.41</b>	.12	.34
SOCIAL	.50	2.79	<b>.52</b>	.00	<b>.50</b>	.13
HEALTH	.48	2.68	<b>.48</b>	<b>.45</b>	.31	.00
PUBERTY	.46	2.59	<b>.47</b>	.00	.00	.25
INDEPENDENCE	.43	2.40	.45	<b>.50</b>	<b>-.40</b>	.00
ORGANISATION	.37	2.09	.38	<b>.42</b>	.51	.00
COMPETITIVE FRAMEWORK	.35	1.99	.24	.23	<b>.48</b>	.21
MORAL ORIENTATION	.00	.00	.28	10	<b>.46</b>	<b>.44</b>

**Rotated component matrix** shown in Table 3, was computed for delineating the distinct *clusters* of relationships which existed.

**Table 3**

**Rotated Component Matrix for adolescents' perception  
 of mothers' parenting**

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
TOTAL	<b>.82</b>	.22	<b>.50</b>	.11
ACADEMIC	<b>.68</b>	.34	.00	.10
RECREATION	<b>.68</b>	.27	.00	.00
NUTRITION	<b>.66</b>	.00	.30	.00
DEMO. OF LOVE	<b>.64</b>	.00	.15	.17
PERSONALITY DEV.	<b>.63</b>	.10	.38	.24
HEALTH	<b>.61</b>	.26	.18	.23
PUBERTY	<b>.49</b>	.20	.00	.00
INDEPENDENCE	.00	<b>.71</b>	.32	.00
REC. ORIENTATION	.33	<b>.69</b>	.00	.00
COHESION	.20	<b>.65</b>	.00	.31
EXPRESSIVENESS	.11	<b>.59</b>	.36	.25
ECONOMIC	.21	.00	<b>.76</b>	.18
CLOTHES	.28	.18	<b>.70</b>	.25
SOCIAL	.24	.28	<b>.59</b>	.23
MORAL ORIENTATION	.00	.00	.22	<b>.67</b>
ORGANISATION	.18	.34	.13	<b>.64</b>
COMPETITIVE F. WORK	.00	.00	.00	<b>.61</b>

Four factors were extracted after rotation. The **first factor** was strongly associated with variables of child rearing practices namely, academic, recreation, nutrition, demonstration of love, personality development, health, puberty and total mean score. The **second factor** showed positively significant loadings on dimensions of family environment, namely, independence, recreation orientation, cohesion and expressiveness. The **third factor** yielded high loadings on economic, clothes, social and total mean scores of child rearing and the **fourth factor** was strongly associated with moral orientation, organization and competitive framework dimensions of family environment. The significant loadings ranged between .494 - .823 for the clusters in factors 1 and 3 i.e. the ones related to child rearing practices and from .592 - .719 for variables of factors 2 and 4 i.e. the ones related to family environment.

**Adolescents’ perception of family environment as related to the perception of their fathers’ parenting**

Inter correlations were computed for adolescents’ perception of their fathers’ child rearing practices and family environment as shown in Table 4 given below. Highly significant and positive inter correlations at .001 level were seen amongst almost all the areas of child rearing practices as well as with the total mean score. The correlations between puberty and other areas of child rearing however did not emerge as strongly as the other aspects. Lower correlations emerged between perception of family environment and many variables of child rearing. Perception of the dimensions of competitive framework and organization in the family environment did not correlate significantly with majority of the variables of child rearing. Perception of moral orientation and independence showed low and insignificant correlation with some aspects of fathers’ child rearing. Perception of recreation orientation, cohesion and expressiveness in family environment however showed significant correlation with majority of the variables of child rearing practices.

**Table 4**

**Correlation Matrix of adolescents’ perception of their fathers’ child rearing practices and family environment**

\*\*correlation is significant at .01 level (2 tailed)

\*correlation is significant at .05 level (2 tailed)

	ACA	SOC	REC	ECO	NUT	CLO	PUB	DLO	PD	HEA	CF	CO	EX	IN	MO	OR	RO	Total	
ACA	1.00	.27**	.45**	.26**	.40**	.35**	.21**	.41**	.53**	.28**	.12	.28**	.17*	.13	.26**	.16*	.21**	.63**	
SOC		1.00	.33**	.40**	.37**	.52**	.17*	.31**	.36**	.35**	.02	.19*	.27**	.25**	.07	.01	.30**	.62**	
REC			1.00	.35**	.48**	.4	.18*	.44**	.48**	.34**	.08	.42**	.30**	.16*	.22**	.19*	.39**	.66**	
ECO				1.00	.47**	.52**	.29**	.31**	.47**	.37**	.05	.25**	.36**	.24**	.29**	.12	.20**	.66**	
NUT					1.00	.49**	.14	.38**	.55**	.43**	.09	.33**	.28**	.21**	.22**	.0	.29**	.70**	
CLO						1.00	.1	.45**	.50**	.40**	.10	.36**	.39**	.31**	.26**	.12	.33**	.73**	
PUB							1.00	.23**	.17*	.12	.02	.14	.19**	.14	.08	.12	.2	.42**	
DLO								1.00	.62**	.44**	.10	.34**	.35**	.23**	.16*	.14	.31**	.71**	
PD									1.00	.61**	.09	.34**	.34**	.24**	.22**	.07	.29**	.80**	
HEA										1.00	.00	.19**	.18*	.05	.19**	.05	.16*	.65**	
CF											1.00	.12	.10	.14	.16*	.34**	.09	.09	
CO												1.00	.52**	.34**	.21**	.32**	.46**	.43**	
EX													1.00	.43**	.10	.25**	.37**	.43**	
IN														1.00	.01	.20*	.38**	.30**	
MO															1.0	.24**	.10	.30**	
OR																1.00	.23**	.17*	
RO																	1.00	.41**	
Total																			10

**Factor analysis**

Factor analysis was further carried out on the above correlations. Table5 given below shows the unrotated factors which defined the most general patterns of relationship in the data. Three components with eigen values of more than 1 emerged. High factor loadings were noted for majority of the variables of child rearing practices and few variables of family environment in component 1, while component 2 showed high loadings on some variables of family environment. Component 3 had high factor loadings on three sub variables of family environment, namely organization, competitive framework, and moral orientation.

**TABLE 5**

**Unrotated Component Matrix for adolescents' perception of fathers' parenting**

Component	Initial Eigen values	% of Variance	Components		
			1	2	3
TOTAL	6.55	36.43	<b>.96</b>	.21	.00
PERSONALITY DEV.	1.74	9.66	<b>.78</b>	.25	.00
HEALTH	1.31	7.32	<b>.74</b>	.00	.10
NUTRITION	.98	5.49	<b>.70</b>	.18	.00
CLOTHES	.95	5.32	<b>.69</b>	.0	.00
DEMO. OF LOVE	.87	4.86	<b>.69</b>	.00	.00
ECONOMIC	.76	4.26	<b>.65</b>	.13	.00
ACADEMIC	.68	3.81	<b>.60</b>	.12	.28
RECREATION	.61	3.39	<b>.60</b>	<b>.41</b>	.12
SOCIAL	.58	3.25	<b>.58</b>	.20	.33
INDEPENDENCE	.56	3.11	<b>.58</b>	<b>.45</b>	.00
EXPRESSIVENESS	.47	2.64	<b>.57</b>	<b>.41</b>	.24
REC. ORIENTATION	.43	2.42	<b>.53</b>	.38	.29
COHESION	.41	2.31	.35	.00	.15
PUBERTY	.40	2.27	.28	<b>.61</b>	.37
ORGANISATION	.36	2.0	.42	<b>.46</b>	<b>.43</b>
COMPETITIVE F. WORK	.25	1.39	.36	<b>.00</b>	<b>.57</b>
MORAL ORIENTATION	.00	.00	.16	<b>.44</b>	<b>.49</b>

Rotated component matrix given in Table 6 below, delineated the distinct *clusters* of relationships which existed

**TABLE 6**

Rotated Component Matrix for adolescents' perception of fathers' parenting

	Component		
	1	2	3
TOTAL	<b>.93</b>	.32	.00
PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT	<b>.81</b>	.15	.00
HEALTH	<b>.73</b>	.00	.00
NUTRITION	<b>.69</b>	.18	.00
CLOTHES	<b>.65</b>	.37	.00
DEMONSTRATION OF LOVE	<b>.64</b>	.25	.10
ECONOMIC	<b>.62</b>	.23	.00
ACADEMIC	<b>.62</b>	.00	.27
RECREATION	<b>.60</b>	.27	.20
SOCIAL	<b>.55</b>	.34	.26
INDEPENDENCE	.00	<b>.76</b>	.00
EXPRESSIVENESS	.2	<b>.69</b>	.15
RECREATION ORIENTATION	.21	<b>.68</b>	.00
COHESION	.25	<b>.61</b>	.32
PUBERTY	.26	.28	.00
ORGANISATION	.00	.32	<b>.70</b>
COMPETITIVE FRAMEWORK	.0	.00	<b>.68</b>
MORAL ORIENTATION	.34	.00	<b>.57</b>

Three factors were extracted after rotation.

**The first factor** was strongly associated with variables of child rearing practices and included all its sub variables except puberty.

**The second factor** showed positively significant loadings on independence and expressiveness recreation orientation and cohesion, the dimensions of family environment.

**The third factor** had highly loaded three variables related to family environment namely, organization, competitive framework and moral orientation.

## DISCUSSION

### Adolescents' Perception of child rearing practices as related to family environment

The family and especially the parental behaviour plays an extremely important role in the multifaceted development and adjustment of adolescents. Various theorists have reported the influence of parenting practices on the personality characteristics. The relationship between behaviour of children, child rearing practices as well as parental attitude has often been examined. It is reported that in the family, each family member influences and is influenced by the other members[5], thus producing a family environment which is determined by the interpersonal relationships among family members. A healthy family characterised by emphasis on personal growth, cohesion and organisation [50], is related to psychological well being of adolescents and a positive perception of parenting and family environment [6].

Studies done in India have focussed mainly on the effect of parenting on personality traits of adolescents such as antisocial behaviour [7], feelings of insecurity[8], achievement orientation[9] and social behaviour[10]. However, hardly any documented research on adolescents' perception of child rearing practices as related to their perception of family environment was available, especially so where parents had several stressors related to the occupation. Work on behavioural aspect of parenting rather than attitudinal too was seen to be a neglected area. The relationship of adolescents perception of family environment and parenting practices in defence officers families is discussed separately for mothers and fathers parenting.

#### **Adolescents' perception of mothers' parenting as related to their perception of family environment**

*Factor I emerged as an important heavily loaded factor and included all sub variables of child rearing as well as cohesion, expressiveness and recreation orientation dimensions of family environment. Overall child rearing practices was giving one cohesive factor but family environment was not yielding a single factor and was split into expressiveness, cohesion, recreation orientation independence and organisation on Factor II and independence, organisation, competitive framework, and moral orientation in Factor III. Independence was negatively correlated with organisation, competitive framework and moral orientation. In the IV Factor economic aspect of child rearing practices and moral orientation of family environment though having low loading came together.*

Varimax rotation with Kaiser normalisation showed clearly that in *the Factor I, the adolescents perceived mothers' child rearing practices as one unit* specially in terms of behavioural aspects of child rearing like academics, recreation, nutrition, demonstration of love personality development, health and puberty. Research has consistently shown that various aspects of parenting work in consonance with each other and influence adolescent outcomes[14,51]. Adolescents perceive mothers' parenting as one integrated unit and their feelings about her parenting practices are coloured by their interpretation of her behaviour in the various areas of parenting rather than by what she merely says or believes in.

*The II Factor which emerged reflected aspects of family environment such as independence, recreation orientation cohesion and expressiveness, which clustered together. These dimensions related to fostering autonomy and family relationships of the adolescents[52-53]. These dimensions also indicated the degree of commitment and support family members provided for one another and the extent to which they felt encouraged to express their feelings directly.*

Three aspects of child rearing practices related to *social status and prestige* of adolescents like economic, social and clothes along with the total scores emerged in *the III Factor*.

In the *IV Factor*, dimensions of family environment, namely *moral orientation, organisation and competitive framework* emerged as a separate factor. These dimensions of family environment related to *family maintenance*[54] and *effective functioning of adolescents in the family as well as the society*.

Mothers seem to be perceived setting clear boundaries on the roles and duties of the adolescents and indulging in rational discussion and compromise related with these [54].

#### **Adolescents' perception of fathers' parenting as related to family environment**

Adolescents' perception of fathers' parenting was also analysed in relation to their perception of the family environment. *Unrotated component matrix* for their perception as given in Table 5, showed I Factor loading on *all sub variables of child rearing practices except for puberty along with independence, expressiveness, recreation orientation and organisation dimensions of the family environment*

Some variables such as recreation, independence, organisation and expressiveness *showed doubling* and were also part of the II Factor. Unlike in the case of perception of mothers, the majority of dimensions of family environment except competitive framework and recreation orientation clustered as single component in the II Factor. The III Factor had positive loading on organisation, competitive framework and moral orientation.

*The rotated factor analysis* (Table 6) gave a clearer picture. Total scores of child rearing practices were heavily loaded with a value of .93 and clustered with all the other sub variables of child rearing practice except puberty. All these variables were positively loaded and as in the case of perception of mothers' child rearing, were giving one cohesive factor. This finding reiterates the fact that parenting of both the fathers and mothers seems to be perceived in totality of their child rearing behaviours related to all aspects of parenting as a unit.

Family environment was splintered and its different dimensions emerged in the II and III Factors.

The II Factor had heavy positive loadings on independence, expressiveness, recreation orientation and cohesion indicating that perception of family environment in relation to fathers' parenting was influenced by good communication and clear expression of personal ideas and feelings even when they differed, and by showing sensitivity to the needs and feelings of each member. It also related to the way families spent their time together, the amount of support they gave and the interests they shared [54].

The III Factor was loaded on organisation, competitive framework and moral orientation, indicating that adolescents perceived fathers giving importance to structure, rules and values in relation to family activities and responsibilities as well as achievement.

This clubbing of sub variables of family environment in the second and third factor showed the same trend of splinting as in the case of perception of mothers, showing that adolescents' perception of family environment did not vary with perception of mothers' or fathers' parenting individually. The perception of family environment seemed to be the result of how parenting was perceived as a whole.

So even though there was difference in adolescents' perception of mothers' and fathers' parenting and in self perception of either, there was similarity in factors emerging for perception of the family environment. Overall picture which emerges, thus, indicates that parenting and family environment are perceived in terms of similar clusters. However, the two are independent as the perception of child rearing is related more to the actual behaviour of the parents while the perception of family environment is governed more by the beliefs and attitudes of the family members.

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