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**SOCIAL INCLUSION  
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HUMAN DEVELOPMENT**





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**THE INDIAN ECONOMIC ASSOCIATION**

199. Assessing the Structure of Decent and Secure Employment in Bihar: Evidence from PLFS 2023-24  
OM PRAKASH SAHU  
SANJAY KUMAR  
AMIT KUMAR SINHA ..... 1687
200. Maternal and Child Health Outcomes in Bihar: Evaluating the Effectiveness of JananiSurakshaYojana (2020-2024)  
ABHISHEK ANAND ..... 1694
201. A Study on Work-Life Balance and Its Impact on Employee Productivity  
SNEHA KUMARI ..... 1702
202. Psychosocial Predictors of Employment Readiness: The Role of SES and Family Attachment among Emerging Adults in India  
SAJIN FRANCIS  
M. MURUGANATHAN ..... 1710
203. Employment and Human Development: Pathways to Inclusive Economic Growth  
S. MUTHU MEENAKSHI ..... 1719
204. Assessing the Impact of Self-Help Groups on Women's Entrepreneurial Development in Rural Thiruvallur District of Tamil Nadu  
T. SELVI ..... 1729
205. A Study on Employee Engagement and Its Influence on Organizational Performance in Ites Sector  
NARMADHA  
K.VINAYAGAM ..... 1737
206. Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development in Tamil Nadu through CSR Initiatives of the Tata Foundation  
B KALAIYARASAN ..... 1742
207. Financial Inclusion Without Spatial Security: The Paradox of Street Vending Policy in India  
ARPITA SINGH ..... 1746
208. Employment and Unemployment Trends of Rural and Urban Areas - A Macro level Study in India 2017 - 2022  
ANKASALA SAMBBA SEEVA RAV ..... 1753
209. Anaemia as a Human Capital Challenge: A Qualitative Analysis  
P DIVYAGAYATHRI  
S. CHANDRA CHUD ..... 1762
210. The Socio-Cultural Satisfaction of Indian Expatriates in Gulf Cooperation (GCC) Countries: A Gendered Analysis  
SHEMEEM K.H.  
V. BALA RUBY ..... 1768
211. Digital Transformation in Kerala Tourism: Assessing the Impact of Technology on Human Resource Development  
PRAVEENA PREMAN P P  
A. GOKULA KRISHNAN ..... 1774
212. A Study on the Work Life Balance of It Professionals in India  
ROSHINI THOMAS  
SASI KUMAR. P ..... 1787
213. An Alternative Approach of PPP in Context of MID Day Meal Programme in India: Using Data Envelopment Analysis (DEA)  
SATCHIDANANDA SARDAR ..... 1796
214. Socioeconomic Determinants of Health Inequalities in India :A Comparative Perspective for Global Pathways  
ASHWIN KRISHNA  
ROOPA PATAVARDHAN  
MAYA K ..... 1803
215. Exploring the Antecedents of Work-Life Balance on Job Satisfaction  
MAHALAKSHMI  
M. KOTTEESWARAN ..... 1811
216. Regional Analysis of Socio-Economic Indicators in India: A Comprehensive Empirical Study Based on NSSO Data  
CHOWDAPPA V. A  
SRI MANJUNATHA ULAVATHI  
SHETTAR ..... 1817
217. Impact of Ddu-Gky in Generation of Rural Youth Employment Opportunities: A Study Ofkarnataka State  
VISHWANATH A. KHOT  
RAGHAVENDRA HAJGOLKAR ..... 1828
218. Gender-Inclusive Economic Growth via Financial Literacy: The Coimbatore Case  
AHANYA C. B  
AKSHAYA P. K ..... 1834

# Psychosocial Predictors of Employment Readiness: The Role of SES and Family Attachment among Emerging Adults in India

Sajin Francis\*  
M. Muruganathan\*\*

## Abstract

*Emerging adulthood, the period roughly between 18 and 29 years, represents a transitional phase marked by identity exploration, educational advancement, skill development, and the search for stable employment. In the Indian context, this stage becomes even more significant due to the country's large youth population, competitive labour markets, and socio-cultural expectations surrounding career success. Two major psychological and social factors—socio-economic status (SES) and family attachment—play a vital role in shaping an individual's readiness to enter the workforce. Employment readiness refers to the combination of skills, attitudes, confidence, and contextual resources that enable young adults to secure and sustain meaningful employment. This study explores how socio-economic status (SES) and family attachment influence employment readiness among individuals aged 18–25. Higher SES is associated with better educational opportunities, skill development, and exposure to career-related networks, contributing positively to employment readiness. Using a sample of 300 participants, standardized scales measured SES, family attachment, and employment readiness. Correlational analysis revealed significant positive relationships among the variables, while regression results indicated that SES and family attachment together predicted nearly half of the variance in employment readiness ( $R^2 = .494$ ). Family attachment emerged as the stronger predictor, highlighting the essential role of psychological and relational factors alongside economic conditions. The findings emphasize the need for integrated approaches that address both personal and structural determinants of employability in India.*

**Keywords:** Socio-economic status, Family attachment, Employment readiness, emerging adults.

## Introduction

The stage of emerging adulthood (18–25 years) is a critical developmental period marked by identity formation, educational advancement, and the pursuit of career pathways. Employment readiness encompasses not only technical skills but also psychological attributes such as self-confidence, resilience, autonomy, and future orientation. Understanding how SES and family attachment influence these outcomes provides valuable insights into the overall career preparedness of Indian youth. In rapidly developing economies like India, employment readiness has gained prominence as industries demand a blend of technical competencies, soft skills, and psychological preparedness. Employment readiness encompasses not only job-specific abilities but also emotional maturity, motivation, adaptability, and self-efficacy. Two key influences shape these outcomes:

**Socio-Economic Status (SES)**, which determines access to resources such as quality education, digital connectivity, and skill training.

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1. **Family attachment**, which provides the emotional foundation necessary for confidence, resilience, and perseverance.

Although both factors play significant roles, limited research in India has examined their combined impact on employment readiness. This study aims to fill this gap by analyzing SES and family attachment as predictors of employability among Indian emerging adults.

### **Socio-Economic Status and Employment Readiness**

Socio-economic status is a multifaceted construct comprising household income, parental education, living conditions, and access to material and cultural resources. In India, SES is strongly connected to the opportunities available to young adults, particularly those related to quality education, skill training, and career exposure. Higher SES often leads to better schooling, greater technological access, improved English proficiency, and increased chances of pursuing higher education—all of which directly enhance employability.

Emerging adults from affluent backgrounds typically have more opportunities for extracurricular activities, internships, and professional networking. These experiences help build soft skills such as communication, problem-solving, leadership, and adaptability—attributes highly valued in contemporary workplaces. On the other hand, individuals from lower SES backgrounds may face interrupted education, the pressure to contribute financially to the household, or a lack of role models in professional careers. These constraints can lead to lower confidence, limited skill development, and reduced employment aspirations.

However, SES does not operate solely at the material level. It impacts psychological well-being as well. Research shows that economic hardship during adolescence and emerging adulthood can increase stress, decrease self-esteem, and weaken future orientation. Such emotional and cognitive challenges further hinder employment readiness. Despite this, many young adults from low-SES backgrounds exhibit resilience, adaptability, and strong work ethic due to early exposure to responsibility. Yet, systemic barriers often prevent them from fully leveraging these strengths in the job market.

### **Family Attachment and Employment Readiness**

Family plays an essential role in shaping career attitudes and psychological development, especially in collectivist societies like India. Family attachment refers to the emotional bond, trust, communication quality, and perceived support shared between a young adult and their parents or caregivers. A secure attachment provides emotional stability, motivation, and confidence—all of which are central to employment readiness.

Young adults with strong family attachment benefit from encouragement to pursue higher studies, emotional support during stress, and guidance in making career decisions. Parents often act as primary socialization agents, influencing values related to work ethic, discipline, optimism, and persistence. In families with open communication, emerging adults are more likely to express career aspirations, explore opportunities, and seek constructive feedback. Secure attachment also contributes to psychological resilience, enabling youth to better handle job search failures or workplace challenges.

Conversely, weak or conflicted family attachment can lead to emotional insecurity, anxiety, and poor decision-making skills. Young adults from such backgrounds may struggle with setting long-term career goals, managing stress, or seeking help. Furthermore, overprotective or overly controlling family environments may hinder independence—an essential component of employment readiness—by restricting the development of autonomy and self-confidence.

Attachment patterns also influence motivation: youth who feel valued and supported are more likely to believe in their abilities and persist in job searching, whereas those with strained family relationships may internalize negative self-beliefs. In India, where many young adults still rely on family financial support during higher education, attachment quality further determines how well they navigate the transition from dependency to adulthood.

## **Review of Literature**

### **Socio-Economic Status and Developmental Opportunities**

SES is a composite of income, parental education, occupation, and access to material resources. Young adults from higher SES backgrounds often benefit from:

- Enhanced educational support
- Exposure to professional networks
- Availability of digital and learning tools
- Stable environments that promote cognitive and social development

Conversely, low-SES youth face challenges including limited guidance, economic pressures, and fewer skill-building opportunities, all of which affect workforce readiness.

### **Family Attachment and Psychological Well-Being**

Family attachment reflects emotional warmth, trust, communication, and support within the family unit. Attachment theory suggests that stable family relationships foster key psychological traits such as:

- Self-confidence
- Emotional regulation
- Resilience
- Positive social interactions

These characteristics enhance critical employment-related skills such as interpersonal communication, decision-making, and stress management.

### **Employment Readiness in Emerging Adults**

Employment readiness involves:

- Skill competency
- Career planning
- Psychological preparedness
- Motivation and adaptability

- **Work-oriented attitudes**

Employment readiness among emerging adults in India is shaped by a complex combination of psychosocial factors, among which socio-economic status and family attachment play central roles. Both economic factors (SES) and psychosocial factors (family attachment) contribute to a young adult's ability to navigate the demands of the labor market. Family plays an essential role in shaping career attitudes and psychological development, especially in collectivist societies like India. Family attachment refers to the emotional bond, trust, communication quality, and perceived support shared between a young adult and their parents or caregivers. A secure attachment provides emotional stability, motivation, and confidence—all of which are central to employment readiness.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To assess the relationship between socio-economic status and employment readiness.
2. To examine how family attachment contributes to employment readiness.
3. To evaluate the combined predictive effect of SES and family attachment on employment readiness.

### **Methodology**

#### **Research Design**

A quantitative, cross-sectional, Correlational research design was used.

#### **Sample**

- N = 300 emerging adults aged 18–25
- Selected from colleges, training centers, and community groups
- Representation from diverse socio-economic backgrounds and both rural and urban regions

#### **Instruments**

1. **Socio-Economic Status Scale**
2. **Family Attachment Scale**
3. **Employment Readiness Inventory**

All instruments demonstrated strong reliability and validity.

#### **Procedure**

Participants completed the questionnaire voluntarily after providing informed consent. Data collection was conducted in group and individual settings and google form.

### Statistical Techniques

- Descriptive statistics
- Pearson correlation coefficient
- Multiple regression analysis

### Results

#### Descriptive Statistics (N = 300)

Variable	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Socio-Economic Status	42.16	8.55	21	63
Family Attachment	71.45	10.32	45	94
Employment Readiness	78.62	11.28	49	103

Data indicate moderate SES, high family attachment, and moderately high employment readiness.

### Correlation Analysis

#### Correlations Between SES, Family Attachment, and Employment Readiness

Variables	SES	Family Attachment	Employment Readiness
Socio-Economic Status	1	.38	.46
Family Attachment	.38	1	.52
Employment Readiness	.46	.52	1

Note:  $p < .01$

All variables demonstrated significant positive relationships.

### Multiple Regression Analysis

#### Regression Analysis Predicting Employment Readiness

Predictor	B	SE B	$\beta$	t	p
Constant	21.84	4.31	—	5.06	.000
Socio-Economic Status	0.42	0.08	.31	5.10	.000
Family Attachment	0.53	0.07	.44	7.37	.000

Both predictors were statistically significant, with family attachment exerting greater influence.

### Model Summary

Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	F	p
SES + Family Attachment	.703	.494	.491	145.68	.000

SES and family attachment accounted for 49.4% of the variance in employment readiness.

## Discussion

The results highlight the critical roles of both socio-economic conditions and family relationships in shaping employment readiness among emerging adults.

### Role of Socio-Economic Status

Higher SES contributes to:

- Access to quality education
- Better exposure to skill-building resources
- Reduced financial stress
- Greater opportunities for internships and digital learning

These factors support the development of employability skills, explaining SES's positive relationship with employment readiness.

### Access to Educational and Skill Resources

Socio-economic status significantly shapes the opportunities and experiences available to emerging adults. Higher SES families often provide greater access to quality schooling, private coaching, digital resources, and extracurricular exposure. These advantages translate into better academic performance, language proficiency, and technological literacy—skills that directly enhance employability.

In contrast, youth from lower SES backgrounds may experience disrupted education, limited technological access, and financial pressures that require early participation in low-skilled work. These conditions reduce the time and opportunity available for skill development, career exploration, and participation in professional networks.

### Psychological Impact of SES

Beyond material access, SES influences psychological development. Economic security fosters a sense of control, optimism, and long-term planning, all of which support the transition into employment. Low SES, however, is associated with chronic stress, reduced self-esteem, and feelings of uncertainty about the future. These emotional states can negatively affect motivation, problem-solving, and persistence during job searches.

### Career Aspirations and Exposure

Youth from higher SES families are more likely to be exposed to diverse career paths through their parents, social circles, and institutional settings. They receive better career guidance and mentorship, which broadens their aspirations. Conversely, emerging adults from low SES backgrounds may internalize restrictions, limiting their career ambitions to low-risk, immediately accessible jobs.

### Family Attachment as a Psychosocial Influence

#### Emotional Support and Stability

Family attachment refers to the emotional bond, trust, communication, and support shared between emerging adults and their families. In India's collectivist culture, these bonds are particularly strong

and continue to influence life choices well into adulthood. Secure family attachment provides emotional stability, reassurance, and encouragement, enabling young adults to pursue challenging educational or career opportunities without fear of failure.

Emotionally supportive families foster psychological resilience, enabling youth to cope more effectively with setbacks such as interview rejections or academic challenges.

### **Development of Autonomy and Self-Efficacy**

Although Indian families tend to be closely knit, healthy attachment promotes autonomy rather than dependence. Parents who use supportive communication, provide guidance, and encourage independent decision-making help emerging adults develop confidence and problem-solving abilities. These qualities are essential in modern workplaces that value initiative, adaptability, and responsibility.

In contrast, families characterized by conflict, overcontrol, or emotional distance may inadvertently undermine the development of self-efficacy. Such youth may struggle with decision-making, self-motivation, and interpersonal skills—key components of employment readiness.

### **Career Socialization and Guidance**

Family attachment also influences career attitudes. Parents often serve as primary role models in shaping values related to work ethic, discipline, and long-term goal setting. Youth with strong family attachment are more likely to seek advice, discuss career concerns, and receive guidance during critical transitions. Paternal and maternal encouragement often contributes to higher levels of motivation, competence, and clarity regarding career paths.

### **Interaction Between SES and Family Attachment**

SES and family attachment interact in dynamic ways to shape employment readiness. Higher SES families typically have more time, resources, and emotional capacity to create healthy attachment environments. However, low SES families often compensate for economic hardship through strong emotional bonds, which boost resilience and determination among youth.

Conversely, high SES families can sometimes experience emotional distance due to demanding professional schedules or lifestyle pressures. Thus, neither SES nor attachment alone fully predicts employment readiness; rather, it is the combination of material support and emotional environment that shapes career outcomes.

For example:

- A high SES youth with weak family attachment may have resources but lack confidence or motivation.
- A low SES youth with strong attachment may show greater resilience and commitment despite limited opportunities.

This interplay suggests that improving employment readiness requires interventions targeting both economic and emotional dimensions.

### **Influence of Family Attachment**

Family attachment emerged as the stronger predictor, suggesting that psychological support systems significantly shape career readiness. Supportive familial environments nurture:

- Emotional resilience
- Self-assurance
- Motivation
- Positive attitudes toward challenges

These traits are essential in preparing youth for professional expectations and workplace demands.

### Combined Impact

The combined effect of SES and family attachment underscores the importance of integrating psychological and economic approaches to improving youth employability. Enhancing emotional support alongside structural opportunities can lead to more effective employment outcomes.

### Implications

#### Implications for Employment Readiness in the Indian Context

- **Need for Comprehensive Career Guidance**

Many Indian youth lack structured career counselling. Schools and colleges should provide evidence-based guidance that considers students' psychological needs and economic backgrounds.

- **Strengthening Family Involvement**

Programs that educate parents about healthy communication, emotional support, and autonomy-building can enhance young adults' psychological preparedness for employment.

- **Addressing SES-Driven Inequities**

Government and NGOs must expand access to scholarships, vocational training, digital literacy programs, and career mentorship for low SES youth.

- **Mental Health and Soft Skills Development**

Fostering resilience, communication skills, teamwork, and problem-solving abilities should be integrated into university and community programs to enhance both psychological readiness and employability.

- **Community and Peer Support Networks**

For youth lacking strong family attachment, peer groups, community mentors, and youth clubs can serve as alternative sources of emotional and motivational support.

### Conclusion

Socio-economic status and family attachment are powerful predictors of employment readiness among emerging adults in India. While SES influences access to education, resources, and opportunities, family attachment shapes emotional security, motivation, and decision-making. Together, they create the foundation for young adults to successfully transition into the world of work. As India continues to navigate its demographic dividend, recognizing the psychological and social dimensions of employability becomes essential. Strengthening both material access and emotional support networks will empower emerging adults to build meaningful, sustainable careers and contribute to national development.

The study concludes that socio-economic status and family attachment significantly influence employment readiness among India's emerging adults. While SES provides necessary structural resources, family attachment strengthens psychological competencies that are equally essential for career preparedness. A holistic approach addressing both economic and emotional dimensions is critical for supporting young adults' transition into the workforce.

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