



The Interplay Between Parenting Styles, Emotional Regulation, and Relationship Quality among Young Adults

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Abstract: This research explores the developmental and co-regulatory processes that link early family experiences to adult relational outcomes through the investigation of parenting styles, emotional regulation, and relationship quality in young adults. Employing a quantitative correlational design, the study included 105 young adults ($N=105$), assessed using standardized psychological instruments. Regression and Pearson correlation analyses revealed that perceived parenting styles are a significant predictor of both emotional regulation ($R^2 = 0.069$, $p = 0.006$) and adult relational quality ($R^2 = 0.155$, $p < 0.001$). In addition, emotional regulation was positively correlated with relationship quality ($r = .346$, $p < .05$), pinpointing its role as an important psychological process underlying interpersonal maturity. Results are consistent with current concepts of emotion socialization and highlight the enduring influence of primary caregiving systems on adult psychological resilience and intimacy. Clinical and educational relevance for family therapy and emotional competencies training are addressed.

Keywords: *Parenting Styles, Emotional Regulation, Relationship Quality, Young Adults, Emotion Socialization.*

1. Introduction

The immediate family acts as the primary system in which a person's psychological, emotional and social development takes place. Caregiver processes that are relational in nature foundationally create cognitive and emotional schemas that endure well into adulthood, as research on attachment would suggest. With Repeated reference Emerging adulthood, (usually age 18–25) is a unique stage of development during which individuals tend to seek personal

repertoires of autonomy, identity synthesis, and development of significant long-term interpersonal relations. As a result, it is important to examine how early memories of parenting influence current emotional regulation and adult relationship functioning for both structural and developmental psychology.

2. Theoretical Framework

Diana Baumrind's standard typology, parental prototypes considered to be approximate descriptions of real parents, is founded on two behavioral dimensions: responsiveness (warmth and support) and demandingness (control and enforcement of rules). This model includes four different types of parenting styles: authoritative (high demandingness, high responsiveness), authoritarian (high demandingness, low responsiveness), permissive (low demandingness, high responsiveness), and neglectful/uninvolved (low demandingness, low responsiveness).

There is a vast body of literature to suggest that an authoritative style of upbringing consistently promotes optimal emotional autonomy by offering a secure base from which to explore oneself and one's world and through which to regulate oneself. In contrast, authoritarian parenting imposes strict rules of behavior with little emotional confirmation, with implications of repression of emotions, attachment needs, or results in internalizing pathologies. Despite being emotionally warm, permissive approaches to discipline are not structurally bound, thus they may encourage impulsivity and a poor ability to tolerate distress (McKinney & Linn, 1982; Miller, 1996; Modlin & Raskind, 2004). To conclude, neglectful parenting causes the greatest liabilities, often appearing as pervasive emotional dysregulation and fragile adult attachments.

2.1 *The Mediating Role of Emotional Regulation*

Emotional regulation is the monitoring, assessing, and modifying of emotional reactions in a manner that is suitable to the context at hand. Emotion socialization theory suggests that this ability is not completely innate and is shaped to a large degree by early interactions with primary caregivers who demonstrate and reinforce emotional responses. In early adulthood, emotional regulation serves as an internal pathway by which family-of-origin experiences shape adult relationship functioning. People with more advanced emotional regulation also show greater levels of empathy, positive conflict management and mutual satisfaction in romantic and peer relationships. On the other hand, emotional dysregulation has been associated with interpersonal violence,(8) with emotional distancing,(3) or with relational dissolution in the family system.

2.2 Present Study and Hypotheses

Whereas prior research has typically assessed parenting styles, emotional competencies, and relationship outcomes separately, this study considers them within the context of a linked developmental pathway. The current study examines the effect of perceived parenting on emotional regulation and relationship satisfaction in young adults.

Hypothesis 1 (H₁): Perceived parenting styles exert a significant predictive impact on emotional regulation among young adults.

Hypothesis 2 (H₂): Perceived parenting styles exert a significant predictive impact on relationship quality among young adults.

Hypothesis 3 (H₃): There is a statistically significant, positive relationship between parenting styles, emotional regulation, and relationship quality.

3. Method

3.1 Participants

The sample consisted of 105 young adults (N = 105) recruited through a purposive sampling strategy. Eligible participants included working professionals and students navigating the transitional phase of early adulthood. Data were compiled via a secure online administration platform.

3.2 Measures

Parental care giving Style Scale: The sociodemographic and care giving style (parenting style) dimensions of the parents were assessed in terms of structural dimensions of the parental authority and bonding with a well-established measurement scale that was designed for the purpose. The scale is highly reliable with known test-retest reliability coefficients ($r = .911$) and internal consistency reliability through split half reliability ($\alpha = .795$).

Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ): A measure of normal differences between people in the use of the two most common emotion regulation strategies, Cognitive Reappraisal and Expressive Suppression. Rated on a 7-point Likert scale, the 10-item scale has demonstrated acceptable to good internal consistencies across the literature ($\alpha = .73$ to $.82$).

Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS): The RAS is a 7-item self-report measure designed to assess the global relationship satisfaction and quality. All items are scored on a 5-point Likert scale (from 1 = very dissatisfied to 5 = very satisfied). The scale demonstrates excellent internal consistency with reported Cronbach's alpha of $.86$.

3.3 Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS software. The operationalised variables were described in terms of their central tendency and distribution using descriptive statistics. Ordinary least squares (OLS) linear regression analyses were conducted to test the predictions in H₁ and H₂. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were computed to investigate the linear relationships hypothesized in H₃.

4. Results

Descriptive Analysis

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for Study Variables (N = 105)

Variable	Mean	SD	Minimum Score Profile Range
Parenting Styles	97.35	20.23	Moderate Variability
Emotional Regulation	47.48	10.05	Moderate to High Control
Relationship Quality	23.48	5.88	Moderate Satisfaction

Regression Analysis: Hypotheses 1 and 2

Following H₁, a linear regression analysis was conducted to test prediction of emotional regulation by perceived parenting styles. These results suggested that parenting style explains around 6.9% of the variance observed in emotional regulation ($R^2 = .069$, Adjusted $R^2 = .061$). The model was significant, $F(1, 103) = 7.72$, $p = .0065$. Thus, H₁ is supported.

Table 2: Regression Model: Parenting Styles Predicting Emotional Regulation

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Standard Error	F	Significance (p)
Regression	.264	.070	.061	9.736	7.716	.0065

In relation to H₂, a different linear regression was executed to predict adult relationship quality based on parenting styles. Reported parenting styles accounted for 15.5% of the variance in the quality of adult relationships ($R^2 = .155$, Adjusted $R^2 = .147$). The regression model was significant, $F(1, 103) = 18.92$, $p < .001$. Therefore, H₂ is supported.

Table 3: *Regression Model: Parenting Styles Predicting Relationship Quality*

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Standard Error	F	Significance (p)
Regression	.394	.155	.147	5.430	18.921	< .001

Correlation Analysis: Hypothesis 3

The linear associations of the three constructs were mapped using Pearson correlation coefficients. As can be seen from Table 4, all the variables were positively correlated. Importantly, parenting styles were positively related to emotional regulation ($r = .264, p < .05$) and relationship quality ($r = .394, p < .05$). Importantly, relationship quality remained positively predicted by emotional regulation ($r = .346, p < .05$). These positive, non-random paths confirms that H_3 is supported.

Table 4: *Pearson Correlation Matrix Between Focal Measures*

Variables	1. Parenting Styles	2. Emotional Regulation	3. Relationship Quality
1. Parenting Styles	1	—	—
2. Emotional Regulation	.264*	1	—
3. Relationship Quality	.394*	.346*	1

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.

5. Discussion

These empirical results support modern developmental psychological theories and explain the process through which early family relationships influence adult relationships. The findings suggest that the child's family home has a lasting psychological effect, which is evident in emotional regulation and adult romantic relationship satisfaction.

Developmental Links

The large path between Perceived Parenting and Emotional Regulation ($R^2 = .069$) is also consistent with emotion socialization theory. Warm but firm: authoritative parents are warm and responsive to their children but are also clear about expectations and limits on children's behavior. On the other hand, people raised in extreme authoritarian or negligent

homes may find their processing of emotion as adults hampered by early experiences of emotional invalidation or poorly developed personal boundaries.

Moreover, the regression analysis predicting adult relationship quality from parenting styles ($R^2 = .155$) is consistent with traditional attachment theories. Early parent-child relationships influence internal working models of self-worth and partner dependability. Supportive authoritative parenting has been shown to nurture interpersonal security and trust, which relate to constructive communication and greater relationship satisfaction in adulthood. In contrast, authoritarian or unemotional parental styles may impair the ability to express emotion openly, which may manifest as avoidant or anxious attachment style in adult romantic relationships.

The Role of Emotional Regulation in Adult Relationships

The substantial association between emotional regulation and relationship quality ($r = .346$) points to the functional importance of emotional control in healthy adult relationships. Individuals with healthier emotional regulation are better able to manage interpersonal distress without retreating to maladaptive strategies such as expressive suppression or emotional extremes. The positive correlations among all three variables indicate that emotional regulation could serve as a key psychological mechanism that translates early family-of-origin experiences into healthy adult relationship functioning.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

Overall, the present results suggest that perceived parenting styles continue to influence young adults' psychological and relational outcomes. The empirical findings support the notion that early caregiving environments have a profound impact on an individual's capacity to regulate emotions in adulthood and the quality of his or her intimate relationships. Consequently, emotional regulation is a pivotal developmental mediator linking early family experiences with relational well-being in adulthood.

Practical Recommendations

a) Systemic Parent Support Efforts: Community healthcare systems ought to develop psychoeducational interventions that are accessible and promote authoritative parenting, highlighting the significance of emotional validation and consistent boundary enforcement.

b) Curricular Approaches: Schools may integrate research-supported emotional intelligence and stress-management curricula within youth counseling services to facilitate healthy emotional self-regulation.

c) Family-of-Origin Focused Clinical Interventions: Marriage and family therapists treating young adults in relational distress are advised to work on family-of-origin issues in order to identify and modify core emotional and behavioral patterns.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

Although the present study makes important contributions to understanding the development, it should be interpreted in light of a number of limitations. First, while there is nothing unique about the narrative data collected in this study that would make these biases any more or less likely, the narratives are retrospective accounts and thus potentially subject to the common biases in recall and social desirability. Second, the cross-sectional nature of this study curtails making definitive statements about causality. Finally, the generalizability of the findings was limited by the relatively small sample size. Future research employing longitudinal designs, incorporating multi-informant assessment methods (e.g., dyadic tracking), and enrolling more diverse samples, is needed to more fully delineate these developmental trajectories within and across cultures and SES.

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