

Does Parenting Style Predict Identity and Emotional Outcomes in Emerging Adulthood?

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Abstract

Past research has examined the role of parenting style in identity development and academic adjustment (Roth et al., 2009), but the role of self-regulation is yet to be determined. The present study examined the influence of two parenting styles—parental autonomy support and parental conditional regard—during emerging adulthood as it relates to self-regulatory style, exploration and commitment of identity, and emotional outcomes such as self-esteem and satisfaction with life. Eighty undergraduate students completed an on-line survey. Preliminary results indicated that parental autonomy support was positively correlated with internal self-regulation, identity development, and emotional outcomes. Parental conditional regard was positively correlated with external self-regulation and negatively correlated with emotional outcomes. Regression analyses confirmed that parenting style predicts identity and emotional outcomes during emerging adulthood, suggesting that these outcomes are a function of parenting behavior.

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Parents influence their children during each stage of life. In infancy, parents interact with their children and choose their clothing, diet, and entertainment. Throughout childhood, they determine with whom their children interact, the activities in which their children participate, and how their children manage their emotions. During adolescence, parents exert their influence by providing advice about schoolwork, social dilemmas, and values. Throughout development from childhood to adolescence, parents play an important role in the formation of their child's regulation of emotions and behaviors, as well as their child's self-esteem and identity (Shaffer & Kipp, 2010). The purpose of this study was to examine the ways in which parenting style influences the decisions children make and the ways in which children manage aspects of their lives that pertain to motivation and identity development.

Emerging Adulthood

Emerging adulthood is a period of development that occurs between adolescence and young adulthood, when individuals are roughly 18 to 25 years of age, and is characterized by change and exploration of possible life paths (Arnett, 2000, 2004, 2007). Many emerging adults recognize that they are no longer adolescents but that they do not yet perceive themselves as adults. The feeling of being in-between stems from the transient nature of emerging adulthood—many emerging adults have temporary residences, short-term school commitments or unsettled career paths, and romantic relationships that are rather flexible (Arnett, 2000).

Identity development plays a prominent role in emerging adulthood as individuals are exposed to many opportunities to explore career paths, romantic relationships, and worldviews. At the same time, emerging adults progress toward greater independence from their parents (Schwartz, Cote, & Arnett, 2005). As they gain independence, emerging adults assume

responsibility for their identity and actively pursue new opportunities which then lead to more enduring choices (Arnett, 2000). For example, emerging adults begin to determine what sort of romantic partner they desire or which occupation best fits their talents. It is through these explorations that emerging adults determine who they are and what they want out of life (Arnett, 2004).

Some emerging adults are more advanced than others in terms of identity development. Schwartz et al. (2005), in a study of emerging adults and identity development across ethnic groups, found that agency, or self-direction, is positively correlated with exploration, flexible commitment, and deliberate choice making. These findings suggest that a sense of self-direction is an important component of healthy identity development in emerging adulthood. Thus, it is important to explore how a sense of agency develops during adolescence and continues to evolve as emerging adults make progress in their identity development.

Just as changes occur in their own identities, changes also occur in the relationship that emerging adults have with their parents. The dynamics of the parent-child relationship shift during emerging adulthood so that parents are no longer seen as dominant figures and children are no longer in a subordinate or dependent role. Emerging adults may begin to see their parents as companions, not just as parental figures; likewise, parents begin to see their children as peers, not just as their dependents (Arnett, 2004). According to Arnett, parents no longer need to enforce house rules and can, instead, develop a friendlier and less directive relationship with their children. It is also during this time that emerging adults acknowledge their parents' good and bad qualities, and begin to see them as complex individuals. The role of parents, and their parenting styles in particular, is the primary focus of the following research study.

Parenting Style

Parenting style has been referred to as a socialization approach to raising children through which parents teach their children norms, values, behavior, and social skills (Deci, Eghrari, Patrick, & Leone, 1994; Deci & Ryan, 1995). The present research project focused on two parenting styles, parental autonomy support and parental conditional regard, both of which involve distinct ways of reacting to desirable and undesirable behaviors (Joussemet, Landry, & Koestner, 2008; Roth, Assor, Niemiec, Ryan, & Deci, 2009).

Parental Autonomy Support. Parents with the autonomy support parenting style encourage their children to be self-starters, independent decision makers, and autonomous individuals. Parents actively support their children by providing rationale for their requests, recognizing and discussing the feelings of their children, offering choices to foster decision making skills, and minimizing the use of controlling techniques such as conditional affection (Joussemet et al., 2008). For example, parents might ask their children to clean up their room and then explain that the task of cleaning teaches personal responsibility for their belongings and for completing tasks. Or, parents might ask their children to talk about their emotions following a temper tantrum or dispute. As a result of the consistent support from their parents, children develop the ability to regulate their emotions and make self-directed, autonomous decisions.

Parental autonomy support has been found to correlate positively with positive emotional outcomes. In fact, many research studies (e.g., Joussemet et al., 2008; Luyckx, Soenens, Goossens, & Vansteenkiste, 2007) have found parental autonomy support to have positive effects on children's self-regulation, achievement, social skills, academic adjustment, and identification with choices like college major. Roth et al. (2009) found that autonomy support would lead emerging adults to have a sense of choice during identity development, integrative regulation of emotions, and an increased level of exploration. Thus, not only is autonomy support linked with

positive emotional outcomes and identity development, but it is also related to emotional and behavioral regulation that is internalized within one's sense of self.

Parental Conditional Regard. In contrast to parental autonomy support through which parents provide unconditional support for their children, parental conditional regard motivates children to exhibit desirable behaviors by making parental affection contingent on the child's good or bad behavior (Roth, et al., 2009; Barber, 2002). There are two types of conditional regard: positive and negative. Positive regard involves providing more affection for good behavior while negative regard involves withdrawing affection for bad behavior. For example, children who earn good grades in school might be rewarded with verbal praise, "job well done!" and a hug from their parents. On the other hand, children who earn poor grades in school might be given the cold shoulder or ignored by their parents.

Conditional love and conditional parenting seem inherently bad because both imply that love is not always available. However, mainstream parenting experts often advise parents to be conditional parents. Alfie Kohn, author of the book Unconditional Parenting: Moving from Rewards and Punishments to Love and Reason, writes about Dr. Phil McGraw from the TV show, *Dr. Phil*, and Jo Frost from the parenting TV show, *Supernanny*. Kohn (2009) argues that parents are frequently advised to give attention, praise, and love as rewards for good behavior and to withdraw love through a time-out, for example, in response to bad behavior. In agreement with researchers such as Roth et al. (2009), Kohn indicates that children who are parented with conditional love learn that they must earn a parent's love, a lesson that has harmful psychological effects.

Children who are parented in this way quickly learn to discriminate between desirable and undesirable behavior depending on the response they elicit from their parents, which then

increases the likelihood that children will act on those behaviors deemed desirable by their parents. However, researchers have found conditional regard to be positively correlated with negative emotional consequences. Although children learn to discriminate between good and bad behavior, they also learn that affection is dependent on their enactment of certain behaviors, which contributes to the development of contingent self-esteem, or self-esteem that depends on success in certain domains (Assor Roth, & Deci, 2004).

Conditional regard has also been linked to low self-esteem. Assor et al. (2004) addressed the emotional impact of parental conditional regard in a population of mothers and daughters who had conditional parents. Mothers whose parents were conditionally affectionate reported low levels of self-worth and were more likely to parent their children in the same way. Furthermore, Assor et al. found that mothers and their daughters reported a strong internal compulsion to enact behaviors with which they did not strongly identify. In other words, they enacted behaviors that did not agree with their personal identity. The results of this study suggest that conditional parenting leads individuals to regulate their behavior according to external expectations or constraints.

A similar study by Roth et al. (2009), looked at the emotional and academic influence of positive and negative conditional regard among high school students. Both types of conditional parenting were found to have negative consequences for motivation, emotional well-being, and behavior. Roth et al. also found that each type of conditional regard—positive and negative—differentially affected motivation and behavior. Positive regard predicted an internal compulsion to enact behaviors and highly constricted behavior, while negative regard predicted enactment of undesirable behavior, academic disengagement, and resentment toward parents. Again, the research suggests that conditional regard, both positive and negative, leads individuals to

regulate their behavior either because they feel compelled to do so or, in the case of academic disengagement, they lack motivation. In fact, Roth et al. (2009) found that negative regard led children to enact behaviors opposite of that which their parents considered desirable.

Self-Regulation.

Past research has found that parenting style is related to the way in which children self-regulate their behavior. Self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2008) suggests that people are naturally motivated to internalize, or integrate the regulation of important activities or behaviors into their concept of the self. If a behavior is successfully internalized it is said to be self-determined because the individuals have identified with the behavior and integrated it into their identity. For example, parents request that their children clean their rooms and children usually comply with this request. If children have internalized the external request from their parents, the children clean their rooms whether or not their parents ask. Perhaps the children find cleaning their room to be satisfying, and have included the value of cleanliness in their identity. The extent to which individuals have internalized, or taken into their identity, valued activities or behaviors determines their self-regulatory style.

According to Koestner, Losier, Vallerand, and Carducci (1996) and Losier, Perrault, Koestner, and Vallerand (2001), there are four regulatory styles: intrinsic motivation, identification, introjection, and amotivation. Intrinsic motivation is an internalized self-regulatory style in which behaviors are performed because they are inherently satisfying and interesting, such as the room-cleaning example. Identification is also an internalized self-regulatory style in which behaviors are performed because they are personally important although they are not necessarily inherently interesting. The third self-regulatory style is called introjection, which means that behaviors are motivated by external factors such as a parent's

request. Last, amotivation is characterized by passivity and an absence of motivation. An individual with the amotivation self-regulatory style is unlikely to begin the internalization process or engage in behaviors.

Each self-regulatory style has been found to correlate with specific psychological outcomes. Deci et al. (1994) found internalized self-regulation (i.e., intrinsic and identification) to be associated with positive outcomes such as creativity, cognitive flexibility, achievement, satisfaction, and physical and psychological health. Introjection, on the other hand, has been correlated with negative outcomes. In a study of political attitudes and behavior, Koestner et al. (1996) reported introjection to be associated with approval-based pressures that result in behavioral regulation that is based on guilt, anxiety avoidance, and self-esteem maintenance. Likewise, Deci et al. (1994) explained that introjection is related to pressure, tension, and anxiety. Essentially, individuals with an introjected self-regulatory style perform a behavior because they feel as if they ought to. Koestner et al. (1996) also found that amotivation is related to passivity, distress, and poor adaptation.

The development of self-regulatory style is influenced by social contexts, such as those created by various parenting styles (Deci et al., 1994). Specifically, supportive social contexts that provide a rationale for requests, acknowledge emotions, and provide opportunities for children to make choices (i.e., what beverage to drink with dinner) promote internalized self-regulation and self-determined behavior because children are encouraged to make independent decisions and act autonomously. In contrast, non-supportive contexts that do not provide opportunities for children to exercise their autonomy lead to introjection. This suggests that self-regulatory style is, in part, a function of whether or not the social context is supportive, and thus promotes or hinders the internalization process.

Identity Development

Parenting style and self-regulation of behavior influence the way in which children make decisions, which relate directly to the process of identity development and choices about one's life path. Marcia (1980) defined identity as a dynamic, self-constructed organization of abilities, beliefs, needs, and personal experiences. According to Marcia (1966, 1980), identity development is a function of exploration and commitment. Exploration refers to how much individuals have considered various viewpoints within a particular realm of their life. For example, individuals who consider what it means to be liberal and conservative have explored within the realm of political identity. Commitment refers to whether or not individuals have decided which viewpoint suits them best. Perhaps the same individuals decide that they identify most with conservative politics and commit to that ideology.

In effect, identity development is a decision making process by which the individual explores and commits to various viewpoints regarding the self. Emerging adults, in particular, constantly make decisions that contribute to their identity development as they consider and decide where to attend college, whom to date, where to work, what to major in, and whether or not they should socialize or study (Arnett, 2000, 2004, 2007). Marcia used exploration and commitment to categorize individuals into four discrete identity statuses: diffused, foreclosed, moratorium, and achieved.

Individuals who score low on exploration and low on commitment (i.e., diffused identity status) characteristically lack volition to explore and to commit to what works best. These individuals often have low self-esteem, low autonomy, and external orientation suggesting that their behavior is externally driven. Marcia referred to individuals with low exploration and high commitment (foreclosed) as doing what their parents tell them to do. For example, college

students whose parents strongly encourage attending medical school decide to be a doctor before exploring other career paths or whether or not this career path is relevant to their interests and abilities. Individuals who score high in exploration but low in commitment (moratorium) are working to distinguish their own goals by engaging in extensive exploration; this identity status is associated with high levels of anxiety as these individuals are unsure of their identity. Last, high exploration and high commitment individuals (achieved) have adequately explored and have committed to those options that suit them best. These individuals report high self-esteem, high autonomy, and internal orientation which means that goal-oriented behavior is internally driven or self-determined (Marcia, 1966; Rowe & Marcia, 1980; Schwartz, 2002; Luyckx, Goossens, & Soenens, 2006).

Marcia (1980) also found that individuals described their relationship with their parents differently depending on the extent of their identity development. Those with high exploration and commitment (i.e., achieved) reported positive or ambivalent relationships while those with high exploration and low commitment (i.e., moratorium) reported that their parents were disapproving and disappointed. Individuals who scored low on exploration but high on commitment (i.e., foreclosed) reported that their parents were loving and affectionate, but that they felt pressure to conform to expectations. And, individuals who scored low on both exploration and commitment (i.e., diffused) reported feeling distant from their parents and that their parents misunderstood them. They also reported feelings of rejection and detachment from their parents. Thus, identity development appears to be related to parenting style and the way in which children relate to their parents.

Emotional Outcomes – Global and Contingent Self-Esteem, and Satisfaction With Life

In addition to the role parents play in their children's behavioral regulation and identity development, parents also help children develop self-esteem and the ability to regulate their emotions (Shaffer & Kipp, 2010). Global self-esteem is a positive or negative attitude toward the self (Rosenberg, 1989). High global self-esteem indicates that individuals think that they are persons of worth, whereas low global self-esteem is characterized by rejection of self and dissatisfaction with self. High self-esteem, or thinking positively of oneself, is related to more effective behavior and better adjustment in comparison to low self-esteem (Deci & Ryan, 1995).

Crocker, Luhtanen, Cooper, and Bouvrette (2003) suggest that self-esteem might be dependent, or contingent, upon feelings of worth within certain domains. The theory of contingent self-esteem holds that self-esteem is dependent on performance in particular domains, such as family support and academic competence (Crocker et al., 2003; Crocker & Knight, 2005). Individuals are selective, sometimes unconsciously, about which domains contribute to their self-worth, and individuals strive to achieve success and avoid failure in the selected domains—the domains on which their self-esteem is dependent.

Deci and Ryan (1995) noted that the socializing context, or parenting style, influences self-esteem such that individuals who are supported and loved are able to behave autonomously and develop noncontingent or global self-esteem. On the other hand, those who are loved only after meeting their parents' expectations tend to develop more contingent self-esteem because the praise they receive from doing well teaches them that success feels good and failure does not. Thus, parenting style is linked to the development of global and/or contingent self-esteem.

Satisfaction with life is yet another indicator of psychological well-being. Pavot and Diener (1993, 2008) defined the construct of satisfaction with life as a judgmental process in which individuals assess the quality of their life on the basis of a personal set of criteria. In this

study, global self-esteem, contingent self-esteem, and satisfaction with life were used as emotional outcomes to measure the effects of parenting style on emerging adults' emotional well-being.

Present Study

Parenting style, according to the literature, functions as a socializing context through which children learn how to behave, make decisions, and manage their emotions. This study focuses on the role of parenting style in self-regulation and identity development during emerging adulthood, as well as the relationship between parenting style and emotional outcomes such as self-esteem, contingent self-esteem, and satisfaction with life. Unlike previous research, this study proposes a mediational role for self-regulation, such that parenting style predicts identity development through its relationship with self-regulation. Also, this study examines the relationship between parenting style, and parental conditional regard in particular, with contingent self-esteem.

Predictions.

1. Parental autonomy support was expected to positively predict intrinsic and identified self-regulatory style, and high exploration and commitment. Parental autonomy support was expected to correlate positively with global self-esteem and satisfaction with life.
2. Positive conditional regard was expected to positively predict introjection and amotivation self-regulatory style, and either exploration or commitment. Positive conditional regard was expected to correlate positively with contingent self-esteem and satisfaction with life.

3. Negative conditional regard was expected to positively predict introjection and amotivation self-regulatory style, and either exploration or commitment. Negative conditional regard was expected to correlate positively with contingent self-esteem and negatively with satisfaction with life.

Method

Participants

Eighty undergraduate volunteers (64 females and 16 males) from General Psychology courses at a small private college were recruited through an online experiment management system to participate in this study. The average age of the participants was 18.82 (SD=0.8); 85% of the participants were freshmen, 10% were sophomores, and 5.1% were juniors or seniors. All measures were formatted into an electronic questionnaire for participants to complete online and course credit was given to each participant upon completion of the study.

Measures

Ego Identity Process Questionnaire (EIPQ; Balistreri, Busch-Rossnagel, & Geisinger, 1995). The identity development variables exploration and commitment were measured using the Ego Identity Process Questionnaire. The EIPQ contains 32 items, half of which reflect commitment to certain beliefs (e.g., I have definitely decided on the occupation I want to pursue) while the other half reflect exploration (e.g., I have considered adopting different kinds of religious beliefs). Twelve items are reverse scored. Participants rated the degree to which they agreed with each item on a 6-point Likert scale. Positive items were scored such that 1 signified strong disagreement and 6 signified strong agreement; scoring was reversed for negative items. Sums were calculated for each identity dimension—commitment and exploration. Balistreri et al. evidenced reliability for the EIPQ instrument with internal

consistency coefficient alphas of .80 for commitment and .86 for exploration; test-retest reliability coefficients were .90 for commitment and .76 for exploration. Balistreri et al. found a significant relationship between identity status and measures of self-esteem, masculinity, and locus of control suggesting strong construct validity. Factor analysis also showed validity for the two-factor model.

Perceptions of Parents Scale (POPS; Luyckx et al., 2007). To measure the autonomy-support parenting style, participants completed a revised version of the Perceptions of Parents Scale which consists of seven items that assess the extent to which individual parents support their child unconditionally, as perceived by the child. Each participant completed the scale twice, once for father and once for mother. Revisions were made by the researcher to ensure that the scale measured autonomy support within the academic domain. Each item was scored on a 5-point Likert scale in which 1 denoted disagreement and 5 denoted agreement; two items were reverse scored. Sample items included “My father/mother allows me to decide things about school for myself” and “My father/mother helps me to choose my own direction in school”. Chronbach alphas for autonomy support were .78 and .74, which indicates good reliability. Luyckx et al. (2007) found that autonomy support was negatively correlated with psychological control ($r=-.66$ and $r=-.62$), suggesting strong construct validity.

Parental Conditional Regard Scales (Roth et al., 2009). The Parental Conditional Regard Scales were used to assess the extent to which the participants’ parents used conditional regard, which involves providing or withdrawing love in response to a child’s behavior, as perceived by the participants. Specifically, this study included two scales—one for negative conditional regard and another for positive conditional regard; both scales pertained to the academic domain. Each scale featured five items and participants are asked to rate their

agreement on a 5-point Likert scale such that 1 indicated disagreement and 5 indicated agreement. A sample item for positive regard is, "When I get a good grade at school, I feel that my mom/dad gives me more warmth and affection than she usually does." A sample item for negative regard is, "If I get a non-satisfactory grade at school, I feel that my mom/dad loves me less". Each participant completed the positive and negative scales once for each parent. Roth et al. (2009) conducted a pilot study, which determined that participants were able to distinguish between positive regard, negative regard, and psychological control, suggesting construct validity for the two scales. Assor et al. (2004) found Cronbach alpha for the father scale to be 0.83 and 0.87 for the mother scale, indicating strong reliability.

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES; Rosenberg, 1989; Brown, 1998). The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale consisted of 10 items designed to measure global self-esteem, or the participants' general feelings toward themselves. Each item required the respondent to rate the extent to which they agreed on a 4-point Likert scale where 0 expressed strong disagreement and 3 expressed strong agreement. Half of the items were worded positively (i.e., I take a positive view of myself) and the rest were worded negatively (i.e., I feel I do not have much to be proud of). Scores were summed and ranged between 0 and 30, with higher scores signifying higher self-esteem. Past research has found strong validity and reliability for the RSES. Rosenberg (1989) found that self-esteem was negatively correlated with measures of depressed affect, neuroticism, anxiety, and peer-group reputation, which suggests strong concurrent validity. Past studies have found alpha reliabilities ranging from .88 to .90 for the RSES (Robins, Hendin, & Trzesniewski, 2001).

Contingent Self-Worth Scale (CSWS; Crocker, et al., 2003). In addition to the global self-esteem measure, participants completed the Contingent Self-Worth Scale to measure

contingent self-worth in relation to the following sources: family support and academic competence, as these were most relevant to the present study. The original CSWS included five other sources (e.g., others' approval, competition, God's love, etc.) that were excluded from this study. There were five items for each source, which required participants to rate the extent to which they agreed on a 7-point Likert scale—1 meant “strongly disagree” and 7 meant “strongly agree”. Sample items included, “It is important to my self-respect that I have a family that cares about me” and “My self-esteem is influenced by my academic performance”. Contingent self-esteem has been correlated with difficulty regulating behavior and feelings of pressure, stress, anxiety, as well as decreased well-being and competitiveness in relationships (Crocker et al., 2003; Crocker & Park, 2004). The CSWS instrument has been found to have strong discriminant validity, as the seven subscales are empirically distinct from global self-esteem, narcissism, social desirability, and parents' income (Crocker et al., 2003). Test-retest reliability scores of .68 and .92 during a 3-month interval and .51 to .88 for an 8.5-month interval, suggesting that the instrument is reliable.

Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS; Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985; Pavot & Diener, 1993, 2008). To assess satisfaction with life, which is an individual's assessment of his or her quality of life based on his or her own criteria, participants completed the Satisfaction With Life Scale. On a 7-point Likert scale, participants were asked to rate the degree to which they agreed with five items (i.e., In most ways my life is close to my ideal.). The reliability of the scale was indicated by a coefficient alpha of .87 and test-retest stability coefficient of .82 (Diener et al., 1985). The SWLS was negatively correlated with measures of neuroticism, emotionality, and impulsivity indicating discriminant validity.

Self-Regulation Scale – Academic and Parent Relationship Domains. In order to measure self-regulation, the researcher created a scale based on the Self-Determination Scale of Political Motivation (SDSPM; Losier, et al., 2001) that was designed to measure four reasons to be interested in politics: intrinsic motivation, identification, introjection, and amotivation. Similarly, the Self-Regulation Scale used in this study was designed to measure four types of motivation to be interested in academics and the parent relationship. One subscale was created for the academic domain and another subscale was created for the parent relationship. Within each subscale there were three stem questions (e.g., Why is it important that you take part in the process of learning? or Why is it important to communicate with your parents?). Each stem question was followed by four responses that measured each of the four types of motivation: intrinsic (“For the pleasure of doing it.”), identification (“I choose to do it for my own good.”), introjection (“Because I am supposed to do it.”), and amotivation (“I don’t know. I don’t see what it does for me.”). Participants were instructed to rank the extent to which each response corresponded to them on a 7-point Likert scale (1 meant “does not correspond to me at all” and 7 meant “corresponds exactly to me”). Chronbach’s alpha scores for intrinsic motivation, identification, introjection, and amotivation on the SDSPM were .85, .84, .78, and .77, respectively. Correlations between the SDSPM’s subscales and regulatory styles toward school and protection of the environment (r ’s ranging from .06 to .40) provide weak evidence for the instrument’s discriminant validity and suggest that the scale measures a construct that is distinct from the domains of academics and protection of the environment.

Procedure

A web-based survey was created by compiling the questionnaire and participants were invited to complete the survey through the on-line recruitment system. Participants were allowed

to complete the survey at their convenience and it required approximately 30 minutes to complete. The survey assessed the participant's perception of their parent's parenting style, the participant's identity development, and their overall well-being as measured by self-esteem and satisfaction with life. Data was collected through the Internet and transferred into a computer file for analysis.

Results

For the analysis, correlations between parenting style and the outcome variables were run to find significant relationships. Then, on the basis of the significant correlations, multiple regressions were run to test the three predictions that guided this research. Each multiple regression equation was entered with a parenting style and two self-regulatory styles as predictor variables, and identity and emotional outcome variables. Each component of analysis has been listed in the order in which it was completed.

Correlational Analysis of Parenting Style & Outcome Variables

Tables 1.1 and 1.2 present correlations among the parenting, self-regulation, identity, and the emotional outcome variables—global self-esteem, contingent self-esteem, and satisfaction with life; correlations presented in the tables are separated by father and mother for each parenting style. As expected, parental autonomy support was positively correlated with internal self-regulation, identity development, and emotional outcomes. Father autonomy support was positively correlated with intrinsic motivation in the parent relationship and academic domains, and with exploration, global self-esteem, and satisfaction with life. Mother autonomy support was positively correlated with satisfaction with life.

Positive conditional regard was positively correlated with external self-regulation and negatively correlated with the emotional outcomes. Father positive conditional regard was

positively correlated with introjection in the parent relationship domain and amotivation in the academic domain. As expected, father and mother positive conditional regard were positively correlated with contingent self-esteem in the family support domain and mother positive conditional regard was negatively correlated with satisfaction with life.

Negative conditional regard from both parents was positively correlated with amotivation in the academic domain. Mother negative regard was also positively correlated with amotivation in the parent relationship domain. The correlations indicated a strong inverse relationship between negative conditional regard from both parents and global self-esteem, and a similar relationship with father negative conditional regard and satisfaction with life.

Multiple Regression Analyses of Parenting Style & Outcome Variables

A series of multiple regression analyses was conducted to predict identity development and emotional outcomes from each style of parenting (autonomy support, positive regard, and negative regard) and explore mediational explanations for these relationships.

Parental Autonomy Support. The first set of regression analyses was conducted with father and mother autonomy support, and intrinsic motivation in the academic and parent relationship domains as predictors of the identity outcome variables exploration and commitment. Father autonomy support, $\beta = .24$, $t(80) = 2.19$, $p < .05$, significantly predicted exploration with father autonomy support accounting for approximately 6% of the variance, $R^2 = .06$, $F(1, 78) = 4.79$, $p < .05$. Consistent with the first prediction, intrinsic motivation in the academic domain, $\beta = .48$, $t(80) = 4.86$, $p < .000$, mediated the predictive relationship between father autonomy support, $\beta = .13$, $t(80) = 1.34$, $p = .185$, and exploration, $R^2 = .28$, $F(2, 77) = 14.91$, $p < .000$, with 28% of the variance accounted for. When intrinsic motivation in the academic domain was entered into the regression equation it led to a non-significant predictive

relationship for father autonomy support on exploration. These results indicate that parental autonomy support from the father predicts higher degrees of exploration in identity development, a relationship that is mediated by intrinsic motivation in the academic domain.

The same analyses were rerun with the same set of predictor variables and satisfaction with life and global self-esteem as outcome variables. Only father autonomy support, $\beta = .46$, $t(80) = 4.54$, $p < .000$, was a significant predictor of satisfaction with life, $R^2 = .21$, $F(1, 78) = 20.6$, $p < .000$, and global self-esteem, $R^2 = .10$, $\beta = .31$, $F(1, 78) = 8.19$, $t(80) = 42.86$, $p < .005$, accounting for 21% and 10% of the variance respectively. These results suggest that children with autonomy supportive parents, specifically fathers, are more likely to have high satisfaction with life and global self-esteem. Additional analyses were run with parental autonomy support and identification in the academic and parent relationship domains as mediators of identity and emotional outcomes, but the results showed no evidence of mediation.

Parental Positive Conditional Regard. In order to test the second hypothesis that predicted a predictive relationship between positive conditional regard, self-regulation, and the identity and emotional outcomes, analyses were conducted with father and mother positive conditional regard and introjected self-regulation in the academic and parent relationship domains as predictors of exploration and commitment. However, the regression analyses were not significant. The analysis was rerun with the same predictors and satisfaction with life and global self-esteem as outcome variables. Mother positive conditional regard was a significant negative predictor of satisfaction with life, $R^2 = .06$, $\beta = -.24$, $F(1, 78) = 4.87$, $t(80) = -2.21$, $p < .03$, accounting for 6% of the variance.

A similar analysis was run with amotivation in the academic and parent relationship domains, which revealed that mother positive conditional regard, $\beta = -.29$, $t(80) = -2.72$, $p < .008$,

and amotivation in the parent relationship domain, $\beta = -.32$, $t(80) = -2.99$, $p < .004$, both significantly and negatively predicted satisfaction with life, $R^2 = .16$, $F(2, 77) = 7.16$, $p < .004$, accounting for 16% of the variance. The results of the regression analyses indicated a negative predictive relationship between mother positive regard and satisfaction with life, which was strengthened by adding amotivation in the parent relationship domain to the regression equation.

Parental Negative Conditional Regard. A final set of analyses was run with father and mother negative conditional regard and introjection in the academic and parent relationship domains as predictors of exploration and commitment. Mother negative conditional regard, $\beta = .29$, $t(80) = 2.67$, $p < .009$, was a significant predictor of commitment, $R^2 = .08$, $F(1, 78) = 7.15$, $p < .009$. There appeared to be a strong relationship between mother negative regard accounting for 8% of the variance in commitment in identity development. The same analysis was rerun substituting amotivation for introjection in the academic and parent relationship domains as predictors of global satisfaction with life and global self-esteem. Father negative regard significantly and negatively predicted satisfaction with life and accounted for 16% of the variance, $R^2 = .16$, $\beta = -.41$, $F(1, 78) = 15.34$, $t(80) = -3.92$, $p < .000$. Together, father negative regard, $\beta = -.37$, $t(80) = -3.58$, $p < .001$, and amotivation in the academic domain, $\beta = -.21$, $t(80) = -2.04$, $p < .045$, were significant predictors of satisfaction with life, $R^2 = .21$, $F(2, 77) = 10.06$, $p < .045$, and accounted for 21% of the variance. According to the results, father negative regard and amotivation in the parent relationship domain played a significant role in satisfaction with life.

Discussion

The results of this study suggest that parenting style is, indeed, linked to self-regulation, identity development, and emotional outcomes during emerging adulthood. In agreement with previous research, autonomy support led to more positive outcomes with identity exploration and

the emotional outcomes of global self-esteem and satisfaction with life (Joussemet et al., 2008). Additionally, conditional regard led to negative emotional outcomes (Assor et al., 2004; Roth et al., 2009). All of the hypotheses were confirmed to varying degrees. First, parental autonomy support from fathers significantly predicted exploration and intrinsic motivation in the academic domain acted as a mediator in the relationship. This suggests that the autonomy support parenting style leads children to develop intrinsic motivation, which then leads them to higher levels of exploration during identity development. Father autonomy support positively predicted satisfaction with life and global self-esteem, which provided evidence in support of the first hypothesis. Overall, the results indicate that parental autonomy support leads children to internal self-regulation, positive identity development, and positive emotional well-being.

Next, parental positive conditional regard from the mother together with amotivation in the parent relationship domain negatively predicted satisfaction with life, which suggests that positive conditional regard predicts negative emotional outcomes. This finding corroborates the finding that conditional parenting has negative consequences for emotional well-being (Roth et al., 2009). Last, the prediction that negative conditional regard would lead to commitment in identity development was confirmed, as mother negative conditional regard was a significant positive predictor of commitment. And, father negative conditional regard and amotivation in the academic domain together negatively predicted satisfaction with life, which further supports the findings of Roth et al. (2009) and the assertions made by Kohn (2009). Self-regulation did not act as a mediator for conditional parenting. However, amotivation strengthened several relationships, which suggests that self-regulation works alongside parenting style to influence emotional outcomes and satisfaction with life, in particular. In contrast to autonomy support, it

seems that conditional parenting—positive and negative—leads to negative outcomes in identity development and emotional well-being.

Perhaps the most intriguing findings of this study relate to contingent self-esteem. It was predicted that positive and negative conditional regard would be positively and strongly correlated with contingent self-esteem. However, only positive regard from both parents was positively correlated with contingent self-esteem in the family support domain. Logically, it makes sense that positive regard is positively correlated with contingent self-esteem because just as children learn that good behavior leads to praise they also learn that performance in certain domains feels good, especially in the family support domain. Surprisingly, though, parental autonomy support from both parents was positively correlated with contingent self-esteem in the family support domain. It is possible that children whose parents were supportive of their choices, behaviors, and attitudes highly value family, and thus base a portion of their self-esteem on their family relationships. Or, it is plausible that these children might garner self-respect and confidence from the comforting and assuring context of their family dynamics. Further research into the role of parenting style in the development of contingent self-esteem is needed to better understand these findings.

With regard to parenting style as a socializing context (Deci et al., 1994), autonomy supportive parents who support their children unconditionally and foster their children's independence might create a context in which children are comfortable to explore who they are and to express their opinions and emotions. It may be that the comfort children experience in this context allows them to be intrinsically motivated and enact behaviors or engage in activities for their own satisfaction, which then leads to positive emotional outcomes. Likewise, it is possible that conditional parents create an environment in which children feel compelled to behave in

certain ways in order to receive love and affection. Hence, children enact certain behaviors or engage in activities because they feel obligated to do so or because such behaviors and activities lead to positive responses. And, because their behaviors are motivated by external factors, these children may feel negatively as indicated in this study by low satisfaction with life and low global self-esteem. The results of this study fit well within the framework of parenting style as a socializing context.

Interestingly, in comparison to mothers, fathers appeared to have the strongest relationships with the identity and emotional variables in this study. Future research might look further into the role of the father during emerging adulthood since the strongest correlations and predictions in this study pertained to the father. Shaffer and Kipp (2010) noted that children who have secure attachments with their fathers are better able to regulate their emotions. Perhaps the relationship between father and child is particularly important for identity development and emotional well-being.

Also, it would be insightful to explore the developmental timeline through longitudinal research to see when emerging adults are most influenced by their parents' parenting style, and if there is a point at which the influence weakens. Research of this kind might help parents and their children navigate the unstable period of emerging adulthood. Last, it is probable that parents use more than one parenting style. So, future research might work to tease apart the individual influence of each parenting style and also look at how parents combine the various parenting styles as they parent their emerging adults.

There were four primary limitations to this research study. First, the sample was overwhelmingly comprised of females, which may have influenced the strong relationship between the father's parenting style and the identity and emotional outcomes. The results must

be interpreted cautiously because of the gender inequities of the sample. However, the gender imbalance revealed the possibility that females are influenced differently by parenting style than males. This implicates the need for future research to explore how parenting style influences male and female emerging adults similarly and differently. Second, the measures of parenting style required the participants to make retrospective judgments about their parents' parenting style. Thus, it was difficult to distinguish whether or not the judgments were based on the recent past (i.e., adolescence) or on the distant past (i.e., childhood). Due to the recency of adolescence, it can be speculated that the participants were considering that time period while completing the questionnaire. It was also unknown whether the participants judged their parents' parenting style on the basis of positive or negative events. Perhaps when the participant reflected on the interactions they shared with their parents, a particularly positive or negative event or sequence of events was most prominent in their mind and consequently skewed their judgment. A third related limitation arose from the lack of an additional, objective measure of parenting style. Past studies have asked parents to report on their own parenting style and observed parents to determine which parenting style is used most often (Joussemet et al., 2008). Such measures provide a way to counteract the subjective judgments made when children retrospectively think about their parents. Last, this study measured parenting style as a discrete variable and each parent was assigned a score for autonomy support, positive conditional regard, and negative conditional regard, but parents may use more than one parenting style on a regular basis. For example, parents who use conditional regard likely use both positive and negative regard by providing praise for good behavior and withdrawing affection for bad behavior. Or, parents may support their children unconditionally in academics but not in sports. This study did not account

for the individual influence of each parenting style nor did it account for the way in which parenting styles combine in practice.

In conclusion, the current study demonstrates that identity development and emotional outcomes of emerging adults are a function of parenting behavior. In other words, there is something characteristic about parenting style that leads children to develop certain self-regulatory styles, which lead to identity and emotional outcomes. Perhaps the socializing context that is created when parents adopt a particular parenting style is important such that children are better able to express their independence and emotions in supportive contexts, or maybe the gender of both parents and children is important. While the exact mechanisms underlying the relationship are unclear, the results indicate that parental autonomy support leads to more positive outcomes and conditional parenting to more negative outcomes.

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Table 1.1

Correlations of Self-Regulatory Style in Parent Relationship and Academic Domains with Parenting Style Variables

Outcome Variable	Autonomy Support		Positive Regard		Negative Regard	
	Father	Mother	Father	Mother	Father	Mother
Parent Relationship Domain						
Intrinsic	.227*	.183	.280*	.187	-.020	.058
Identification	.144	.151	.293**	.312**	.007	.090
Introjection	-.239*	-.271*	.317**	.207	.087	.097
Amotivation	-.422**	-.533**	-.056	-.143	.176	.271*
Academic Domain						
Intrinsic	.223*	.158	-.035	-.032	-.169	-.082
Identification	.167	.098	-.083	.006	.017	-.077
Introjection	-.077	-.137	.175	.099	-.043	.070
Amotivation	-.157	-.207	.223*	.094	.247*	.268*

*p < .05 **p < .01

Table 1.2
Correlations of Identity and Emotional Outcomes with Parenting Style Variables

Outcome Variable	Autonomy Support		Positive Regard		Negative Regard	
	Father	Mother	Father	Mother	Father	Mother
Identity						
Exploration	.241*	.026	.196	.218	.033	.167
Commitment	-.090	-.169	.143	.130	.116	.290**
Emotional						
Global Self-Esteem	.308**	.199	-.215	-.258*	-.325**	-.234*
Contingent Self-Esteem						
Family Support Domain	.368**	.373**	.221*	.265*	-.170	-.063
Academic Domain	.062	.251*	.081	.214	.001	-.024
Satisfaction With Life	.457**	.227*	-.191	-.242*	-.405**	-.172

*p < .05 **p < .01

Appendix A

Ego Identity Process Questionnaire (EIPQ; Balistreri et al., 1995)

1. I have definitely decided on the occupation I want to pursue.
2. I don't expect to change my political principles and ideals.
3. I have considered adopting different kinds of religious beliefs.
4. There has never been a need to question my values.
5. I am very confident about what kinds of friends are best for me.
6. My ideas about men's and women's roles have never changed as I became older.
7. I will always vote for the same political party.
8. I have firmly held views concerning my role in my family.
9. I have engaged in several discussions concerning behaviors involved in dating relationships.
10. I have considered different political views thoughtfully.
11. I have never questioned my view concerning what kind of friend is best for me.
12. My values are likely to change in the future.
13. When I talk to people about religion, I make sure to voice my opinion.
14. I am not sure about what type of dating relationship is best for me.
15. I have not felt the need to reflect upon the importance I place on my family.
16. Regarding religion, my beliefs are likely to change in the near future.
17. I have definite views regarding the ways in which men and women should behave.
18. I have tried to learn about different occupational fields to find the best one for me.
19. I have undergone several experiences that made me change my views on men's and women's roles.
20. I have consistently re-examined many different values in order to find the ones which are best for me.
21. I think what I look for in a friend could change in the future.
22. I have questioned what kind of date is right for me.
23. I am unlikely to alter my vocational goals.
24. I have evaluated many ways in which I fit into my family structure.
25. My ideas about men's and women's roles will never change.
26. I have never questioned my political beliefs.
27. I have had many experiences that led me to review the qualities that I would like my friends to have.
28. I have discussed religious matters with a number of people who believe differently than I do.
29. I am not sure that the values I hold are right for me.
30. I have never questioned my occupational aspirations.
31. The extent to which I value my family is likely to change in the future.
32. My beliefs about dating are firmly held.

Perceptions of Parents Scale (POPS; Luyckx et al., 2007)

1. My father/mother listens to my opinion or perspective when I've got a problem in school.
2. My father/mother is usually willing to consider things from my point of view when I talk to him/her about school.

3. Whenever possible, my father/mother allows me to choose what to do in school.
4. My father/mother allows me to decide things about school for myself.
5. My father/mother insists that I do things in school his/her way.
6. My father/mother is not sensitive to many of my academic needs.
7. My father/mother helps me to choose my own direction in school.

Parental Conditional Regard Scales (Roth et al., 2009)

Perceptions of Negative Regard Scale – Academic Domain

1. If I get a non-satisfactory grade at school, my parent/guardian is less warm and affectionate toward me than usual.
2. If I get a non-satisfactory grade at school, I feel that my parent/guardian loves me less.
3. When I do not succeed in school, I feel that my parent/guardian cares less for me.
4. When I do not succeed in a test, my parent/guardian lets me feel that I am not a worthy person.
5. I think that if I fail in a test my parent/guardian shows me less caring and affection.

Perceptions of Positive Regard Scale – Academic Domain

1. When I get a good grade at school, I feel that my parent/guardian gives me more warmth and affection than s/he usually does.
2. When I get a very good grade at school, I feel that my parent/guardian loves me more.
3. When I study hard, I feel that my parent/guardian appreciates me much more.
4. When I study hard, my parent/guardian is very satisfied with me and is more warm and pleasant with me.
5. I think that if I do well on tests my parent/guardian appreciate me more.

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES; Rosenberg, 1989; Brown, 1998)

1. At times I think I am no good at all.
2. I take a positive view of myself.
3. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.
4. I wish I could have more respect for myself.
5. I certainly feel useless at times.
6. I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.
7. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.
8. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.
9. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.
10. I am able to do things as well as most other people.

Contingent Self-Worth Scale (CSWS; Crocker et al., 2003)

Family Support

1. It is important to my self-respect that I have a family that cares about me.
2. When my family members are proud of me, my sense of self-worth increases.
3. Knowing that my family members love me makes me feel good about myself.
4. When I don't feel loved by my family, my self-esteem goes down.

5. My self-worth is not influenced by the quality of my relationships with my family members.

Academic Competence

1. My self-esteem is influenced by my academic performance.
2. I feel better about myself when I know I'm doing well academically.
3. Doing well in school gives me a sense of self-respect.
4. I feel bad about myself whenever my academic performance is lacking.
5. My opinion about myself isn't tied to how well I do in school.

Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS; Diener et al., 1985; Pavot & Diener, 1993, 2008)

1. In most ways my life is close to my ideal.
2. The conditions of my life are excellent.
3. I am satisfied with my life.
4. So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.
5. If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.

Self-Regulation Scale – Academic and Parent Relationship Domains

Academic Domain

1. Why is it important that you take part in the process of learning?
 - For the pleasure of doing it.
 - I choose to do it for my own good.
 - Because I am supposed to do it.
 - I don't know. I don't see what it does for me.
2. Why is it important that you attend class?
 - For the pleasure of doing it.
 - I choose to do it for my own good.
 - Because I am supposed to do it.
 - I don't know. I don't see what it does for me.
3. Why is it important that you complete assignments for class?
 - For the pleasure of doing it.
 - I choose to do it for my own good.
 - Because I am supposed to do it.
 - I don't know. I don't see what it does for me.

Parent Relationship Domain

1. Why is it important to communicate with your parents?
 - For the pleasure of doing it.
 - I choose to do it for my own good.
 - Because I am supposed to do it.
 - I don't know. I don't see what it does for me.
2. Why is it important to engage in activities with your parents?
 - For the pleasure of doing it.
 - I choose to do it for my own good.
 - Because I am supposed to do it.
 - I don't know. I don't see what it does for me.
3. Why is it important to maintain a relationship with your parents?

- For the pleasure of doing it.
- I choose to do it for my own good.
- Because I am supposed to do it.
- I don't know. I don't see what it does for me.