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REVIEW

Predictors of Romantic Relationship Quality: Exploring the Role of Emotion Regulation, Attachment, and Parenting Styles

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Abstract

As social beings, humans place a central emphasis on relationships in their lives. The importance of relationships continues to depend on the quality of the relationship. In this regard, the quality of relationships has become an important factor affecting both family structure and social order. When evaluated in this context, we can talk about many types of relationships. Among the various relationship types, romantic relationships stand out as a significant contributor to people's overall well-being. The abundance of research studies conducted on the subject underscores its paramount importance. Among the most extensively researched factors influencing the quality of romantic relationships are emotion regulation, attachment style, and parenting style. Individually, these factors have been shown to predict the quality of romantic relationships. This review aims to highlight the interconnectedness of these predictors, working in synergy rather than isolation. Multiple studies have highlighted the complex relationships between parenting style, attachment style, and emotion regulation. Given this interplay, a recommendation is made for future research to discern which factor acts as a predictor and which one serves as a mediator in their combined influence on the quality of romantic relationships.

Keywords: Parenting Style, Romantic Relationship, Attachment Style, Emotion Regulation

Romantik İlişki Kalitesinin Yordayıcıları: Duygu Düzenleme, Bağlanma ve Ebeveynlik Stilleri Rolünün İncelenmesi

Öz

Sosyal varlıklar olarak insanlar hayatlarındaki ilişkilere merkezi bir önem verirler. İlişkilerdeki önem ise ilişkinin kalitesi doğrultusunda yön almaya devam eder. Bu doğrultuda ilişkilerin kalitesi gerek aile yapısını gerekse sosyal düzeni etkileyen önemli bir etmen olmuştur. Bu kapsamda değerlendirildiğinde birçok ilişki türünden bahsedebiliriz. Çeşitli ilişki türleri arasında romantik ilişkiler, insanların genel refahına önemli bir katkı sağlayan bir faktör olarak öne çıkmaktadır. Konuyla ilgili yapılan araştırmaların çokluğu konunun önemini vurgulamaktadır. Romantik ilişkilerin kalitesini etkileyen en kapsamlı araştırılan faktörler arasında duygu düzenleme, bağlanma stili ve ebeveynlik tarzı yer almaktadır. Bireysel olarak bu faktörlerin romantik ilişkilerin kalitesini yordadığı görülmüştür. Bu inceleme, izolasyon yerine bir bütünlük içerisinde çalışan bu yordayıcıların birbirine bağlılığını vurgulamayı amaçlamaktadır. Birçok çalışma ebeveynlik stili, bağlanma stili ve duygu düzenleme arasındaki karmaşık ilişkileri vurgulamıştır. Bu etkileşim göz önüne alındığında, romantik ilişkilerin kalitesi üzerindeki

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birleşik etkide hangi faktörün yordayıcı, hangisinin aracı olarak görev yaptığını ayırt etmek için gelecekteki araştırmalara bir öneride bulunulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ebeveynlik Stilleri, Romantik İlişki, Bağlanma Stili, Duygu Düzenleme

Introduction

Human existence is fundamentally rooted in interpersonal relations. Through ongoing engagement with others, we both influence and are influenced by their actions. The impact of these interactions on an individual's behavior varies depending on the extent of engagement they entail. For instance, certain interpersonal bonds, like romantic relationships, play a substantial role in an individual's life. In a study on loneliness and social isolation, it was stated that social isolation and loneliness increase the risk of death, and at the same time, individuals tend to recover when social isolation and loneliness decrease (Wang et al., 2023). The abundance of research on romantic relationships underscores the significance of this subject. In their quest to uncover the factors that shape the quality of romantic relationships, social scientists, particularly those in psychology, have conducted a series of investigations.

When we look at those studies, some of them focus on specific factors that occur between partners during a relationship, such as authenticity, emotion regulation, and trust, as determinants of the quality of a romantic relationship (see Brunell et al., 2010; Impett et al., 2012; Wickham, 2013). Other studies take partners' background factors, such as attachment style, personality, and parenting style, as key predictors of romantic relationship qualities (see Auslander et al., 2009; Del Toro, 2012; Karre, 2015; Solomon & Jackson, 2014). Although both research groups are important for understanding factors affecting romantic relationships, this review focuses on research that emphasizes partners' background factors. This is because factors such as trust, authenticity, and similar qualities stem from broader factors like the way individuals were raised (parenting style). Thus, by placing

emphasis on overarching factors like parenting style and attachment style, it is possible to attain a more comprehensive grasp of the subject. To explore the connection between specific elements and underlying factors, the concept of emotion regulation, which is one of the factors directly impacting the quality of romantic relationships is incorporated (Del Toro, 2012). Additionally, multiple studies have highlighted the significance of parenting style in predicting both emotion regulation and attachment style. Thus, to pave the way for further research, this literature review endeavors to conceptualize the interconnectedness among the predictor variables of romantic relationship quality. Consequently, the initial section of this review offers an overview of romantic relationships. In subsequent sections, we delve into variables like emotion regulation and attachment style, exploring their connection to romantic relationships. Lastly, the review explores the interplay between parenting style and romantic relationships, considering the roles of emotion regulation and attachment style.

1. Conceptual Basis of Romantic Relationship

Given the increasing rate of divorce (Bradbury et al., 2000; Conger et al., 2000; Halford et al., 1997) along with the complex challenges divorce entails, experts from diverse fields are actively seeking to pinpoint the factors that wield significant influence over the quality of romantic relationships. Nevertheless, before delving into an explanation of what constitutes a romantic relationship, it is essential to articulate the broader concept of a relationship. According to Simpson (1987), in order to claim a connection between two individuals, the actions of one person must influence the actions of the other. This concept of influencing and being influenced by a companion is an inherent characteristic in various relationship dynamics. Nonetheless, the extent of reciprocity varies across different types of

relationships. For instance, the impact someone you encounter on a bus has on your behavior is distinct from the influence exerted by your partner in a romantic relationship. In broad terms, it can be asserted that the closer the relationship, the greater the likelihood that an individual's actions will both impact and be impacted by their companion.

Romantic relationship is one of the widely recognized types of relationships characterized by a significant mutual effect. While there are various definitions for romantic relationships, this review adopts a definition that emphasizes the fundamental aspects of such relationships. According to [Collins et al. \(2009\)](#), a relationship qualifies as romantic when it involves voluntary agreement between individuals and is distinguished by displays of affection and the presence of current or anticipated sexual involvement. These kinds of relationships are common among both adolescents and adults.

[Connolly et al. \(2004\)](#) noted that adolescents start to focus on romantic matters early on, and as they progress into the middle and late stages, romantic relationships assume a central role in their social lives. The influence of romantic relationships on an individual's overall well-being has been a subject of extensive research. For example, a study by [Putzke et al. \(2001\)](#) demonstrated a noteworthy disparity in life satisfaction between married and single individuals. The findings indicated that married individuals reported higher levels of life satisfaction than single individuals. However, in self-reported handicaps, particularly in the domains of social integration and economic self-sufficiency, it was observed that single individuals reported significantly higher levels of these attributes. Similarly, [Braithwaite et al. \(2010\)](#) uncovered that, when compared to their single counterparts, college students engaged in committed relationships exhibited a reduced propensity for mental health problems, were less likely to be overweight or obese, and were involved in fewer risky behaviors, such as binge drinking and driving under the influence of

alcohol. Moreover, [Sorensen \(2007\)](#) underscored that even brief romantic relationships during adolescence play a crucial role in nurturing the potential for enduring, committed relationships in adulthood. However, the impact of a romantic relationship can vary significantly depending on the quality of that relationship. For instance, [Berscheid \(1999\)](#) suggested that when partners perceive their relationship as satisfying, romantic relationships can yield both emotional and physical health benefits. Nonetheless, the establishment of a fulfilling romantic relationship hinges on the presence of several crucial factors. For instance, while listing ten characteristics of a healthy relationship, [Twardowski \(2016\)](#) indicated the significance of elements such as open communication, mutual care, trust, and a commitment to the relationship in building a harmonious partnership. Moreover, [Collins \(2003\)](#) asserted that healthy romantic relationships demonstrate qualities such as understanding, affection, and nurturing. Often, the presence of these attributes equips partners to effectively navigate the challenges they encounter in their daily lives, thereby fostering the success of the relationship.

Unfortunately, not all romantic relationships possess these positive qualities. Some romantic relationships can devolve into situations marked by abuse and an unfair exploitation of one partner. Apart from divorce, such unhealthy relationships can result in enduring physical and psychological problems for an individual. An unhealthy romantic relationship is typically characterized by frustration, hostility, frequent and intense conflicts, as well as controlling behaviors ([Collins, 2003](#)). When a romantic relationship takes on this unhealthy and imbalanced nature, it can give rise to complicated mental and physical problems ([Hofman et al., 2011](#)). Therefore, it can be argued that the quality of a romantic relationship is generally determined by the level of mutual support, the manner in which negative interactions are managed, and the perceived balance of power between partners ([Yu et al.,](#)

2014). This means that the absence of one partner dominating the relationship and the ability of partners to collaboratively address challenges are indications of a successful romantic relationship. Conversely, in a romantic relationship, the presence of one partner exerting dominance over the other and a lack of mutual support in dealing with difficulties are indicators of an unfavorable relationship.

2. Predictor Variables of Romantic Relationship

Numerous studies have been carried out over the years to determine the factors that influence romantic relationships. In this review, attention is only given to three of these factors: parenting style, emotional control, and attachment style. The reason for this choice lies in the comprehensiveness of these variables, their ability to draw the interest of a multitude of empirical investigations, and their relevance to both academic and practical aspects of understanding and improving romantic relationships.

2.1. Emotion Regulation and Romantic Relationship

Emotion regulation is an individual's capacity to cope with and react to a range of emotional experiences. It is not always a conscious effort, rather it also encompasses an individual's unconscious and spontaneous response to emotional situations (Richards et al., 2003). Therefore, it's critical to understand that emotion regulation is more than just coping, which solely relates to a person's conscious effort to manage a certain demand (Lazarus, 1993). Regulating emotion involves adjusting the kind, intensity, expression, or timing of an emotion (Azizi et al., 2015). In daily life, individuals try to prevent negative emotions from arising or at least reduce their intensity and impact when they do occur (Richards et al., 2003). Romantic relationships are one of the contexts that require a higher degree of emotional expression and regulation. Within romantic relationships, where partners

rely on each other, the need for emotional regulation is particularly pronounced. Additionally, various factors within romantic relationships call for prudent decision-making and emotional management. For example, Richards et al. (2003) observed that disagreements and conflicts can arise even in the most outstanding and harmonious romantic relationships. This underscores that, compared to other forms of interpersonal relationships, romantic relationships require a heightened level of emotional expression and regulation. Therefore, it is essential for partners to possess the skill of emotional regulation to effectively respond to the challenges encountered in their day-to-day interactions (Gross, 2002, as cited in Pearson, 2013). Although experts have proposed various methods of emotional regulation, this review focuses on the two most prevalent strategies, namely cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression (Gross & John, 2003). As Gross and John (1998) explained, cognitive reappraisal involves altering one's thoughts about events that evoke emotions or reframing the situation in a positive light, while expressive suppression entails modifying or restraining behavioral reactions in the face of ongoing emotional expression.

The quality of a romantic relationship is significantly influenced by how individuals regulate their emotions. Ineffective emotion regulation, for instance, has been identified as one of the contributing factors to aggression and violence within romantic relationships (Maldonado et al., 2015). Recent research has emphasized that cognitive reappraisal is linked to positive outcomes in romantic relationships, while expressive suppression tends to have the opposite effect. For example, in a recent longitudinal study conducted by Velotti et al. (2016) involving married couples, it was consistently found that the frequent use of suppression by male spouses was predictive of declining marital quality over time. Additionally, the authors indicated that within marital

relationships, female spouses tend to be more attentive to their spouses' use of suppression. Numerous studies have also indicated that participants' use of expressive suppression is associated with an increase in aggression (Davidson et al., 2000; Strüber et al., 2008). The impact of emotion regulation on romantic relationships may stem from how these strategies influence the level of understanding between partners and their ability to utilize coping resources effectively. Drawing from existing literature, it can be posited that emotion regulation's influence on the depth of understanding among partners is mediated through two key mechanisms. One mechanism is through its effect on memory, specifically in terms of the recollection of discussions between partners, while the other mechanism pertains to its effect on communication. As both common sense and a multitude of research studies suggest, the presence of mutual understanding is a pivotal element of a successful romantic relationship. In the context of romantic partnerships, one significant factor contributing to this mutual understanding is the capacity to remember shared memories, which encompass important events and conversations between partners. This act is often viewed as a symbol of valuing the relationship. Conversely, the inability to recall crucial conversations between partners is frequently interpreted as a sign of neglect or indifference toward the relationship.

Emphasizing the significance of retaining memories of conversations within a romantic relationship, Sillars et al. (1990) highlighted those recalling discussions related to the relationship between couples contributes to a "deeper understanding of each other's viewpoints on important relationship matters". This implies that factors that either diminish or enhance a couple's ability to remember their conversations have a direct impact, negatively or positively, on the quality of their romantic relationship by affecting the level of understanding between partners, respectively. One of the factors influencing a

couple's capacity to recall their conversations is their approach to emotion regulation (Richards et al., 2003). For instance, a study involving 86 heterosexual partners demonstrated that cognitive reappraisal enhances a partner's ability to remember their past exchanges and conversations (Richards et al., 2003). Conversely, Richards et al. (2003) noted that expressive suppression has a detrimental effect on conversation memory. In the same research, Richards et al. (2003) pointed out that while participants employing cognitive reappraisal successfully recollected their conversations with their partners, those using expressive suppression struggled to do so.

Another crucial element in fostering understanding between romantic partners, which can be influenced by emotion regulation, is the presence of open and transparent communication. Within a romantic relationship, gaining insights into each other's values and expectations is vital for achieving mutual understanding. The primary means by which an individual can convey their needs and expectations to their partner is through open communication. When an individual refrains from expressing their feelings and desires, it becomes challenging for their partner to respond appropriately. For instance, Righetti et al. (2015) noted that individuals who employ expressive suppression tend to stifle not only their emotions but also their sacrifices for their partners. Consequently, since those who suppress their emotions do not overtly communicate their needs and expectations, the level of support, affection, and reciprocity they need to get from their partners diminishes (Righetti et al., 2015). The absence or reduction of understanding between partners renders them ill-equipped to handle even minor challenges that may arise in daily life. For instance, as reported by Gross and John (2003), individuals who frequently use suppression tend to experience discomfort with intimacy and sharing. Additionally, another potential adverse impact of employing expressive suppression strategies in romantic relationships is its undermining effect on participants' coping

mechanisms. Expressive suppression tends to keep an individual emotionally aroused internally while appearing outwardly composed (Richards et al., 2003). This internal emotional turmoil prompts excessive thinking and worrying about past events, which in turn deplete an individual's cognitive resources (Gross & John, 2003). This depletion of cognitive resources diminishes an individual's capacity to tolerate everyday hassles, making them prone to irritation and conflicts with each other. In summary, it can be concluded that expressive suppression, despite initially appearing to mitigate conflict, ultimately has a negative impact on romantic relationships, whereas cognitive reappraisal contributes positively to the success of romantic partnerships (Righetti et al., 2015).

2.2. Attachment Style and Romantic Relationship

In the realm of developmental psychology, the term "attachment" pertains to the specific manner in which a child forms a bond with at least one caregiver, involving the exchange of comfort and a sense of security (Mahasneh et al., 2013). At its core, the concept of attachment emphasizes the significance of nurturing a secure dependence in infants and young children with at least one caregiver John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth (Bretherton, 1992). As the literature demonstrates, attachment styles can be categorized into two main groups based on the sensitivity and responsiveness of parents or caregivers to the child's need for proximity (Pietromonaco et al., 2006). The first category is known as secure attachment, characterized by a strong and secure bond between the child and the caregiver. The second category is insecure attachment, which includes subtypes like Anxious-preoccupied, Dismissive-avoidant, and disorganized (Fearful-Avoidant). Given that the focus of this review centers on examining the association between attachment style and romantic relationships, this discussion does not delve into an in-depth explanation of the immediate effects of attachment on the child.

Numerous research investigations confirm the significance of attachment style in predicting the quality of romantic relationships in adulthood. For example, Feeney and Noller (1990) asserted that adults exhibit the same attachment styles in their romantic relationships as they did during infancy. This concept is further reinforced by findings from other researchers such as Collins and Read (1990), Hazan and Shaver (1987), and Mikulincer et al. (2004).

An essential question arises concerning how childhood attachment styles persist into adulthood. Doinita and Maria (2015) offer an answer rooted in attachment theory. They posit that a child's interactions with their primary caregiver form an internal model or schema within the child's mind. This model then serves as a framework for guiding interactions in adulthood, particularly within romantic relationships. Thus, adults utilize this early-developed working model to gauge the appropriate levels of openness, trust, closeness, and affection in their romantic partnerships. When examining the impact of attachment style on romantic relationships, secure attachment generally correlates with positive outcomes, while insecure attachment (both avoidance and anxiety) is associated with negative outcomes. A wealth of studies demonstrates that secure attachment predicts successful romantic relationships, as securely attached individuals tend to exhibit qualities such as commitment, loyalty, and trust that are essential for relationship success. For instance, Pistole and Vocaturo (1999) noted that securely attached individuals are committed and loyal to their partners and relationships. Conversely, insecurely attached individuals, both avoidant and anxious, tend to exhibit lower levels of crucial elements for successful romantic relationships, including trust, loyalty, open communication, and assertiveness (Locke, 2008). These deficiencies in insecurely attached individuals can significantly impact the quality of their relationships with their partners (Morgan & Shaver, 1999). Locke's (2008) study

further emphasized that insecure attachment styles inhibit effective communication and assertiveness compared to securely attached individuals. Moreover, research among urban Thai adults conducted by Noppaprach et al. (2015) revealed that insecure attachment styles, both avoidance and anxiety, lead to increased psychological distress and decreased relationship satisfaction, providing further support for these notions.

Nonetheless, despite the overall negative impact associated with insecure attachment, the influence of each specific type of insecure attachment on romantic relationships varies considerably. Attachment avoidance, for instance, is strongly linked to the avoidance of emotional closeness and dependency on others. Consequently, individuals with high levels of attachment avoidance tend to exhibit a strong aversion to interpersonal interaction, and intimacy, and a heightened desire for self-sufficiency and distance from others (Greenfield & Thelen, 1997; Mikulincer, 1998; Rom & Mikulincer, 2003). Consequently, those with this attachment style often grapple with uncertainty within their romantic relationships, which, in turn, diminishes their expected level of commitment needed for relationship longevity (Morgan & Shaver, 1999). This diminished commitment among individuals with avoidant attachment tendencies may create an opportunity for infidelity within romantic relationships, potentially leading to divorce. For instance, Hatamy et al. (2011) research underscores that marital infidelity tends to be more prevalent among participants with avoidant attachment styles compared to those with secure or anxious attachment styles. Conversely, attachment anxiety is associated with an overwhelming desire to maintain closeness in interpersonal relationships. Individuals with attachment anxiety exhibit excessive concerns about the prospect of losing or destabilizing their relationships, frequently preoccupied with fears of rejection, poor judgments, and abandonment

by their partners. Unlike those with attachment avoidance tendencies, individuals with attachment anxiety are driven by an intense need for closeness with their partners, seeking profound acceptance and affection (Pietromonaco et al., 2006; Rom & Mikulincer, 2003). Such individuals often harbor doubts about their adequacy as partners and tend to engage in self-blame for perceived shortcomings (Bogaerts et al., 2008). This exaggerated fear of losing their partners makes individuals with attachment anxiety more demanding and possessive, ultimately eroding trust between partners and negatively impacting the quality of their romantic relationships.

In summary, while insecure attachment styles lack the crucial elements for fostering successful romantic relationships, each type of insecure attachment influences such relationships differently. One type, is marked by an excessive need for closeness to the extent of impinging on a partner's autonomy, while the other, is characterized by avoidance of closeness to the point of compromising commitment to the relationship.

2.3. Parenting Style and Romantic Relationship

In this section, parenting style and romantic relationships are evaluated within the scope of the literature. Additionally, parenting style types are specified in detail.

2.3.1. Overview of parenting style

The primary responsibility of parents is to prepare children for the upcoming stages of their development by implementing rules and discipline (Hoskins, 2014). Parents play a pivotal role in socializing their children, teaching them appropriate behavior across various social contexts. Many psychologists argue that the parent-child relationship, particularly during the early years, serves as a blueprint for the child's later development in various emotional and behavioral outcomes such as self-esteem, morality, academic, and mental health (Hamon,

& Schrod, 2012; Roche et al., 2008; Sahithya et al., 2019; Simons, & Conger, 2007).

While there is general consensus on the influence of parenting style on a child's later development, debates exist in the literature regarding whether the focus should be on a typological approach or on specific parenting behaviors (Hoskins, 2014). Although examining both aspects could provide a comprehensive understanding of the concept, this paper emphasizes the typological approach. A well-known classification of parenting styles, introduced by Baumrind (1971, 1991), categorizes parenting into three distinct patterns. These patterns are delineated based on two key dimensions of parenting behavior: the degree of control and the level of warmth or affection parents exhibit toward their children. By considering the combination of love and demandingness (control) parents provide to their children, parenting styles can be grouped into four categories.

2.3.2. Authoritative parenting style

This parenting style is characterized by a combination of high levels of affection, often referred to as responsiveness, and high levels of control, which is described as demandingness. Parents who employ this style strike a well-balanced approach in their interactions with their children. They establish rules and boundaries that are explained through logical reasoning and emphasize their interactions with love and affection (Jabeen et al., 2013). In this parenting style, children benefit from the warmth and affection provided by their parents, fostering a sense of trust and security. Simultaneously, the guidance and structure set by parents help mitigate potential risks and promote healthy development. Research by Gonzalez et al. (2002) suggests that this type of parenting style is often associated with positive outcomes in children's later development.

2.3.3. Authoritarian parenting style

This form of parenting involves parents exercising great levels of control over their kids

without or with little to no affection. Children are expected to follow family rules without discussion. In a parenting style like this, kids are trained to comply with rigid disciplinary rules without inquiry. Such parenting style is often negatively associated with healthy mental and social development (Pearson, 2013).

2.3.4. Permissive parenting style

This parenting style is primarily characterized by a low level of control along with a significant display of affection. While parents express a great deal of love, the absence of control can expose the child to early encounters with risky behaviors, potentially impeding the development of crucial life skills. Furthermore, this approach may foster an excessive sense of dependence or indulgence. Consequently, as research has indicated, it can result in detrimental and unfavorable behaviors such as diminished self-esteem and substance abuse (Neal & Frick-Horbury 2001).

2.3.5. Uninvolved parenting style

Some parents may neglect to offer both affection and supervision to their children. These parents fail to fulfill their role in providing emotional support and necessary guidance to their children. Among the four parenting styles, the uninvolved approach is most strongly associated with negative outcomes such as lower self-esteem, substance abuse, antisocial behavior, delinquency, and risk of suicidal attempts (Hoskins, 2014; Rothrauff et al., 2009; Sahithya et al., 2019).

2.3.6. Parenting style and romantic relationship

While the influence of parenting style on an individual's later behavior is widely recognized, there is a scarcity of research examining its impact on the quality of romantic relationships. The majority of existing research on parenting style predominantly emphasizes its effects on areas such as personality development, academic achievement, emotional regulation, and behaviors like substance use. This review aims to provide an overview of the research specifically

addressing the connection between parenting style and romantic relationships. In addition to directly exploring the relationship between parenting style and romantic relationships, we have also sought to enhance this review by considering the indirect effects of parenting style on variables such as emotional regulation and attachment style. Given the established links between emotional regulation and attachment style with the quality of romantic relationships, we aim to demonstrate the indirect influence of parenting style on romantic relationships through these pathways.

Research suggests that the nature of adults' romantic relationships often mirrors their childhood interactions with their parents. Among the various parenting styles discussed earlier, the one characterized by a balanced approach involving a suitable level of affection and adequate supervision tends to yield positive outcomes in romantic relationships. For instance, in a study involving ethnically diverse girls, [Auslander et al. \(2009\)](#) found that parenting marked by high levels of love and control contributes to the satisfaction of romantic relationships in adolescents by enhancing mutual understanding. Similarly, the authors also indicated that authoritative parenting not only fosters the development of a child's interpersonal skills but also reduces the likelihood of engaging in risky sexual behaviors.

3. Interrelationship between Predictor Variables of Romantic Relationship Outcome

3.1. Parenting Style and Attachment Style

The attachment style a child develops is not determined by the inherent qualities of the child, whether biological or psychological. Instead, it is fundamentally shaped by the caregiver's interactions with the child ([Barnett et al., 2003](#)). Thus, when discussing attachment style, we are inherently discussing parenting style. As described in previous sections, the nature of attachment depends on the caregiver's ability to meet the child's need for a secure base from

which to explore the world, achieved through consistent love and care ([Miller & Commons, 2010](#)). This implies that the criteria used to categorize parenting styles, specifically love and control, are essential elements for predicting attachment styles. For instance, [Baumrind \(1966\)](#) observed that parents who exhibit authoritative parenting, like those of securely attached children, display affectionate behavior alongside a reasonable level of control. Additionally, the literature provides further evidence that strengthens the connection between parenting style and attachment style. For example, both authoritarian and avoidant parents exhibit similarities in providing low levels of affection (love) while being demanding and unresponsive to their children's needs ([Kochanska et al., 1989](#)).

In a study conducted by [Neal and Frick-Horbury \(2001\)](#) among undergraduate students to explore the link between parenting style and attachment, nearly all participants (92%) with authoritative parents were securely attached. However, it's important to note that research on the relationship between parenting style and attachment style has not consistently demonstrated a direct correlation, as seen in the study conducted by [Mahasneh et al. \(2013\)](#). For example, while in Western countries, authoritarian parenting is often associated with negative attachment styles, research conducted in some parts of Asia and Africa has indicated that authoritarian parenting can be linked to secure attachment ([Jabeen et al., 2013](#); [Neal & Frick-Horbury, 2001](#)). These differences may be influenced by cultural variations and warrant further investigation. Regardless of the specific direction of the relationship, these findings collectively affirm the existence of a significant connection between the two variables.

3.2. Parenting Style, Attachment Style, and Emotion Regulation

Drawing upon extensive experience in family and marriage counseling, [Matta \(2006\)](#) posited that an individual's background within their family of origin significantly influences how they respond

to challenges that may arise within a romantic relationship. In the preceding section, we examined the roles of emotion regulation and parenting style in the context of romantic relationships independently. However, this section aims to explore the interconnectedness between these two predictive variables in the realm of romantic relationships.

Maccoby (1994) asserted that the aptitude for emotion regulation is cultivated during a child's formative years through their interactions with their parents. Through these interactions, children acquire the skills necessary to manage and express their emotions appropriately, guided by the loving and affectionate guidance provided by their parents (Jabeen et al., 2013). This implies that effective parenting fosters improved emotion regulation, while inadequate or problematic parenting styles can lead to challenges in emotional regulation strategies. Jabeen et al. (2013) for example, argued that poor parenting can impact a child's ability to regulate their emotions, resulting in difficulties in emotion regulation.

Several studies have suggested that authoritative parenting styles are associated with positive emotion regulation, while authoritarian and permissive parenting styles are linked to difficulties in emotion regulation. Research by Jabeen et al. (2013) indicated that authoritative parenting predicts a greater capacity for emotional self-control, indicative of effective emotion regulation. Moreover, studies conducted by Herzog et al. (2015) found that authoritative parenting predicts a lower reliance on emotional suppression compared to other parenting styles. Conversely, authoritarian parenting styles were found to predict poor emotional self-control (Eisenberg et al., 2004). Similarly, permissive parenting styles have been associated with negative outcomes related to emotion regulation (Herzog et al., 2015). It is important to note, however, that the influence of parenting style on emotion regulation is contingent upon cultural factors. In more collectivist societies, for instance,

authoritarian parenting styles did not appear to lead to negative emotion regulation outcomes, in contrast to research conducted in Western countries (Neal & Frick-Horbury, 2001). Nevertheless, it is crucial to understand that the role of parenting (attachment) style in predicting emotion regulation does not imply that emotion regulation remains static and unalterable once developed in early childhood. Morris et al. (2007), for example, emphasized the role of self-regulation over time in adapting emotional responses. Rather, the evidence underscores the pivotal role of parenting style in shaping the development of emotion regulation skills.

In summary, the prediction of romantic relationships can be attributed to emotion regulation, attachment style, and parenting style individually. These factors can exert both positive and negative influences on romantic relationships by impacting fundamental relationship elements such as understanding, communication, and trust. However, as the literature suggests, none of these predictors operate in isolation. While further research is warranted, it is conceivable that the effects of each predictor on romantic relationships are not mutually exclusive, suggesting potential interdependencies. For instance, the impact of emotion regulation on romantic relationships may be contingent on attachment or parenting styles, thereby highlighting the intricate web of relationships between these variables.

Conclusion and Suggestions

The majority of research in the realm of romantic relationships has predominantly centered around the examination of variables such as trust, authenticity, emotion regulation, and perceived physical attractiveness. Findings from both experimental and descriptive studies have consistently underscored the significance of these variables in forecasting the overall quality of romantic relationships. However, a substantial body of research has also indicated that these variables are significantly intertwined with more

overarching factors, such as parenting style and attachment styles. Unfortunately, however, there has been a noticeable dearth of research investigating the impact of background factors, such as a partner's upbringing, encompassing parenting and attachment styles, on romantic relationships. Given the considerable influence of background factors, especially attachment styles, in shaping variables like trust and emotion regulation, it is reasonable to hypothesize a connection between these factors. In essence, background factors are likely to influence specific components, such as emotion regulation and trust, which, in turn, impact the overall quality of romantic relationships. As previously discussed, for instance, attachment styles exert their influence on romantic relationships by affecting variables like trust. Consequently, conducting comprehensive research to elucidate the relationship between background factors, like attachment style, and the quality of romantic relationships, mediated through specific factors such as trust, emotion regulation, and authenticity, is of paramount importance.

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