

Parental Acceptance-Rejection and Psychological Adjustment among Young Adults

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of the present study was to investigate the effect of parental acceptance and rejection on psychological adjustment of young adults. A total of 225 (115 male & 110 female) young adults were selected purposively from Rajshahi city as a sample of the study. Adapted Bangla version of the Parental Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire (PARQ, Uddin et al.,2007), Adult Personality Assessment Questionnaire (PAQ, Uddin et al.,2007) were used to measure parental acceptance and rejection, psychological adjustment of the participants. Obtained data were analyzed by employing Mean, Standard deviation, Percentage, Pearson's product moment correlation and independent sample t-test through SPSS version 26. Findings of the study revealed that there is a significant positive correlation between parental acceptance-rejection and psychological adjustment of the participants. The result through t test exhibited that maternal acceptance-rejection ($t = 4.321$) and psychological adjustment ($t = 2.640$) differs significantly in respect the gender of the participants.

Keywords: *Parental Acceptance-rejection, Parental Acceptance-rejection theory, Psychological Adjustment, Young Adult.*

Parents perform an important role specially the first year of their life and become nearest person. Children always expect favorable and pleasing response from parents. Specially in adolescence or young adulthood, the needs and expectations become more complex. Parent's accepting and rejecting behaviors have effect on individual's psychological adjustment (Rohner and Britner), which means a condition of a person can cope any changes. Psychological adjustment is a behavioral process to adapt to changes in their physical, occupational, and social environment. A person may feel powerful and influential when he gets genuine acceptance from another. "Acceptance is kind of fertile soil that allows a tiny seed to turn into a beautiful flower, that is apt of flattering (Dr. Thomas Gordon)." Rejection may include lack of affection, denial, refusal, hostility, adversity, aggression, coldness, aloofness, neglect, indifference, disregard or sometimes undifferentiated rejection. The more an adult child looks to her parents for acceptance, the more the rejection will hurt her feelings of self-worth (Angela Herd).

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Received: November 01, 2022; Revision Received: January 27, 2023; Accepted: January 30, 2023

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Rohner (1980) propounded the theory of Parental Acceptance-Rejection (PAR Theory) that is now apprehended as the theory of Interpersonal acceptance-rejection (IPAR Theory). Personality sub-theories of IPAR Theory's endeavors to forecast and expound major psychological or personality or mental fitness linked the outcome of perceived interpersonal mainly parental acceptance and rejection. There parental rejection has formed with four major characters: (1) emotional coldness and absence of affection which means deprivation of love, care and warmth; (2) hostility and aggression which resembles the expression and emotion of resentment, rage, anger leading to rival behavior (verbal and physical) of parents toward their child; (3) indifference and neglect that refers to lack of concern of parents for children's all needs; and (4) undifferentiated rejection (Rohner, 2016).

Maternal and paternal acceptance-rejection has influenced on psychological adjustment. Ward and Kennedy (1999) propounded psychological adjustment as the ordinary emotions of wellbeing and satisfaction comes from experiencing and adapting new culture with low stress. Young adulthood is a period of life stages, where different type changes have occurred, both mentally and physically. In adulthood, people usually want closeness, intimate relation, respect in everywhere, to get attention from others. Personality sub-theories of IPAR Theory's endeavors to forecast and expound major psychological or personality or mental fitness linked the outcome of perceived interpersonal mainly parental acceptance and rejection. This personality sub-theory for psychological adjustment holds seven personality characters. Aggression or hostility, addiction or dependency, low self-adequacy, gloomy self-esteem, mental instability, psychological unresponsiveness, and view the world negatively, are these characters (Khaleque and Rohner, 2004).

Studies exhibit that the main reason of cognitive, emotional, behavioral and social problems of children, adolescents, and adults everywhere is perceived parental rejection (Khaleque et. al., 2007). A cross sectional research in Pakistan, Finland and the United States called "Perceived parental acceptance-rejection and psychological adjustment of children" was studied by Khaleque et. al. (2007). The result of this study exhibits that the main reason of cognitive, emotional, behavioral and social problems of children, adolescents, and adults everywhere is perceived parental rejection. That indicates that remembered parental rejection is major causes of psychological maladjustment. Eunjung Kim (2008), has researched on Psychological Adjustment in Young Korean American Adolescents and Parental Warmth. Parental warmth is a subscale of PARQ. Result suggested that perceived parental warmth is salient to predict young adolescents' psychological adjustment. Perceived father acceptance-rejection in childhood and psychological adjustment in adulthood was studied by Sadiq Hussain and Seema Munaf in 2012. Result indicated that adults who observed their fathers are rejecting them in their infancy period, their psychological adjustment was unsatisfactory which is opposite from accepted child. On the other hand, father acceptance helps adults to become more adjusted than maladjusted.

In 2014, Abdul Khaleque researched on "Perceived Parental Neglect, and Children's Psychological Maladjustment, and Negative Personality Dispositions." Results revealed that experienced parental indifference or neglect significantly correlated with the psychological maladjustment. Ania Filus & Joanna Roszak has been researched on "The relationships between perceived parental acceptance-rejection and psychological adjustment of young adults in Poland" in July 2014. It has been shown that maternal as well as paternal acceptance were significantly and positively related with child's adjustment by correlational analysis.

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Ebru Akun researched on Relations among adults remembered of parental acceptance/rejection in childhood, self-reported psychological adjustment, and adult psychopathology in 2017. This study lays out evidence about the stable associations between adults recollected of parental acceptance-rejection in childhood and their psychological adjustment. Abdul Khaleque, Muhammad Kamal Uddin, Md. Nur-E-Alam Siddique, Kazi Nur Hossain and Anjuman Shirin researched on Recalled Parental Acceptance/Rejection in Childhood Predict Psychological Adjustment and Rejection Sensitivity in Adulthood (2019). That research has shown that relationships between childhood parental acceptance–rejection and the recent psychological adjustment. Results addressed that parental acceptance in childhood has significant independent effects on the ongoing psychological adjustment of young (both male & female) adults by using hierarchical regression analysis. Miguel Angel et. al studied on Parental acceptance and children’s psychological adjustment: The moderating effects of interpersonal power and prestige across age, in 2019. These results suggest that maternal acceptance has high contribution to younger children’s psychological adjustment.

Diane L. Putnick et. Al. (2021) has investigated a study named “Remembrances of Parental Rejection are Associated with Loneliness as Mediated by Psychological Maladjustment in Young Bangladeshi Men but not Women.” From the findings, they got students narrated their reminiscence of mothers’ and fathers’ acceptance-rejection, and also their loneliness as well as their ongoing psychological maladjustment. Result revealed that those children who experienced rejection from parents in childhood, in adulthood they suffer from psychological maladjustment such as hostility or aggression, emotional disability, lower self-esteem, emotional unresponsiveness and so on. Abdul Khaleque, Vera Monteiro, Ana Rita Reboredo, and Muhammad Kamal Uddin (2021) has researched on the effects of Parental Acceptance-Rejection, Psychological Adjustment, Academic Self-Concept, and Learning Motivation on Adolescents’ Academic Achievement. Multiple inquiry suggested that remembered parental acceptance-rejection impacted psychological adjustment.

Rationale of the Study

Warm, comfortable, healthy and nourishing bonding with parents and their children can have prominent effects on psychological adjustment, on the other hand a cold, unhealthy and feeble relation makes life worse for children. Mental health issues are very common in early adulthood. For long Khaleque and Rohner have given extensive attention to parental-acceptance and rejection. Other researchers were also done much research in this area. However, most of these studies so far have been conducted in foreign culture or most of the participants were child or adolescent in our culture. Considering of these, investigator feels that there is needed to conduct this research to identify additional area. The results of the study will be fruitful for parents to gain the knowledge about parenting and to learn the parental conception to the mental development of their brood. This inquiry would be helpful to produce research findings regarding parental acceptance, rejection and psychological adjustment context in Bangladesh. It will also be helpful for the mental health professionals who works in such area. In Clinical Psychology, these research findings may contribute to give information about the predisposing factors of mental illness and mental health problems.

Objectives

The above-mentioned review of present study displays that young adult’s psychological adjustment is affected by their perceived parental acceptance and rejection. So that the study addresses following objectives:

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- To investigate if there is any association between perceived parental acceptance-rejection and psychological adjustment of young adults.
- To investigate the effect of gender on parental acceptance-rejection and psychological adjustment.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

- The samples of current study comprise of 225 (115 male and 110 female) young adults of Rajshahi city.
- The samples were chosen by using Purposive and convenient sampling techniques from Rajshahi city Corporation. Majority of participants were originated in middle class families. They are the biological offspring of their parents. The samples were picked out on basis of amenities, willing consent, and suitability. We insured them that the documents will be remain confidential.

Measures

There was total three types of self-report questionnaires and Personal Information Form were used in this research along with personal information form.

Personal Information Form

Personal, demographic and social information that included respondents' gender, age, social economic status, educational qualification, educational qualification and occupation of parents, family type, usages of smart phone, desktop or laptop, usages of social media, and hours active in social media all are covered the Personal Information Form.

Questionnaire

1. The Parental Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire Adult version (Adult PARQ: Mother & Father). American Psychological association has published the original Parental Acceptance-rejection questionnaire (Adult PARQ) in 1978. Later it was revised in 1980, 2004 and 2005 (Rohner, 2005). There are three version of PARQ: The Adult PARQ (Father and Mother form), The Child PARQ (Father and Mother form), The Parent PARQ. The standard form of PARQ consists of sixty items, that means the mother form has sixty items and also the father form has sixty items. The PARQ has four subdimensions, which are: a) Warmth/ Affection (total 20 items including items no 1, 5, 8, 12, 15, 19, 22, 26, 29, 33, 36, 40, 43, 47, 50, 54, 55, 57, 58 and 60); b) Hostility/ Aggression (total 15 items including items no 2, 6, 9, 13, 16, 20, 23, 27, 30, 34, 37, 41, 44, 48 and 51); c) Indifference/ Neglect (total 15 items including items no 3, 7, 10, 14, 17, 21, 24, 28, 31, 35, 38, 42, 45, 49 and 52); and d) Undifferentiated Rejection (total 10 items including items no 4, 11, 18, 25, 32, 39, 46, 53, 56 and 59). Muhammad Kamal Uddin, Sabina Sultana and Umme Habiba Jasmine adapted that questionnaire into Bengali language. The two versions (mother and father form) are virtually identical. Respondents are asked to reflect on their observations of their mothers or father's behavior towards them, when they were small (7 through 12 years old). Participants must answer on the basis of their actual feeling, not the way they want to their parent or the way might now like to be as a parent. The PARQ is being used in a total of 30 languages. The Coefficient alphas in this study were .89 (Khaleq and Rohner,2002). The test-retest reliability is .62 (Khaleq and Rohner,2002).

PARQ Scoring: The scoring of PARQ is very easy, it uses four-point Likert-type scales method. There 4 implies "almost always true", 3 implies "sometimes true", 2 implies "rarely true" and 1 implies "almost never true". PARQ total score is obtained by the sum of the four

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subscale scores. The Warmth or Affection scale requires reverse scoring, the reverse score is measuring coldness and lack of affection. Seven items from the indifference or neglect scale (worded positively) should score in reverse to make them fair with the other items in this scale which are negative worded. A low score of 60 suggest maximum perceived acceptance and to a high of 240 refers maximum parental rejection.

2. The Adult Version of Personality Assessment Questionnaire (Adult PAQ). The first PAQ was constructed in 1971 on a rational-theoretical basis (Goldberg,1972). When PAQ were being developed several theoretically pertinent factors were taken into account. According to Holocultural evidence (Rohner,1975), humans everywhere manifest in varying degrees the personality dispositions measured in the PAQ. The PAQ scales have universal applicability. PAQ has two version. These are: The Adult PAQ and the Child PAQ. Adult PAQ are generally used by Adolescents and Adults. The standard form of PAQ contains 63 items which has seven sub-dimensions. Each dimension consists of nine items. These subscales are: a) Hostility/ Aggression (total 9 items including items no 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, 36, 43, 50 and 57); b) Dependency (total 9 items including items no 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, 37, 44, 51 and 58); c) Negative Self-Esteem (total 9 items including items no 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, 38, 45, 52, and 59); d) Negative Self-Adequacy (total 9 items including items no 4, 11, 18, 25, 32, 39, 46, 53 and 60); e) Emotional Unresponsiveness (total 9 items including items no 5, 12, 19, 26, 33, 40, 47, 54 and 61); f) Emotional instability (total 9 items including items no 6, 13, 20, 27, 34, 41, 48, 55 and 62); and g) Negative Worldview (total 9 items including items no 7, 14, 21, 28, 42, 49, 56, and 63). The Bangla version of PAQ was used, which was adapted by Muhammad Kamal Uddin, Sabina Sultana and Umme Habiba Jasmine. The Adult PAQ has seven subscales which measure seven personality dispositions. Those are construed in IPAR Theory's personality sub-theory. The questionnaire is available in 13 different languages. On the standard forms of these scale, the participants should not leave unanswered items, more than six items left unanswered may difficult to compute scale score (Khaleq and Rohner,2005). The item test–retest reliability coefficient across time periods of 12 through 18 months for the Adult PAQ is .76.

PAQ Scoring: Individuals answer to PAQ items on a Likert type style scale which has four points. Where “4” refers almost always true, “3” mentions sometimes true, 2 means rarely true and 1 means almost never true. By summing the seven subscale scores, and some reverse scoring, the scores are obtained. Individual's complete psychological adjustment is acquired by the total score. The scores range from a low of 63 to a high of 252. Low scores indicate well psychological adjustment where high scores indicating crucial psychological maladjustment. Scores below the test's centrum of 157, individuals experienced themselves to be more psychologically adjusted than maladjusted. But when scores at 157 or above the test's centrum, individuals experienced themselves to be more psychologically maladjusted than adjusted.

Design of the present research

The present study has conducted a cross sectional survey design which is a non-experimental design.

Procedure

Data were gathered from each respondent individually from their home or educational institutes. Before collecting data, the researcher took permission from them to visit their house and educational institute. In educational settings, we took permission from their teachers. Participants were enlightened about the aim of the study and requisite rapport was

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formed with them. Questionnaire were delivered to those participants who were fascinated to take part in the study. They were ensured that the information would be kept secret and data would be used for only for investigation's intention. It took 40 minutes to 1 hour for participants to complete the questionnaire. Every contributor was appreciated for their collaboration and association in the study.

Data Processing and Analysis

After collecting data, the main work is to make a result to see the result. Descriptive and inferential statistics were employed for this current study by using the SPSS version 26.

RESULT

The main goal of the research was to inspect the relationship between parental acceptance-rejection and psychological adjustment among the respondents. Bangla version of PARQ was administered to measure the nature of parental acceptance or rejection of the respondents. Bangla version of PAQ was also apply to measure psychological adjustment of the respondents respectively. Obtained data were analyzes by applying Percentages, Mean, Standard deviation, Pearson's product moment correlation, and t-test through employing SPSS version 26. The results of the current study are plotted in the following tables.

From the research it has been showed, only thirteen participants (5.78%) had scored in PARQ (mother version) at or exceeding 150, (M=161.0769, SD=6.43508, N=13) suggesting that they perceived more rejection from mothers than acceptance in childhood. Same results also for PARQ (father version), only thirteen respondents (5.78%) had scores at or exceeding 150, (M=160.4615, SD=11.77296, N=13) suggesting that they accessed more paternal rejection in childhood than acceptance. On the other hand, almost 94.22% participants got accepted by their parents.

Results proposed that, most of the participants (80.89%) in this study is Psychologically adjusted (N=192, Mean=129.6719, SD=14.21310) than maladjusted. Only thirty-three participants (14.67%) are psychologically maladjusted (N=33, Mean=167.9091, SD=9.16639). That indicates most of the respondents of this study is psychologically adjusted than maladjusted.

The PARQ has four subscales for maternal version. The first one is "Warmth and affection", second one is "Hostility and aggression", then "Indifference and neglect" and the last one is "Undifferentiated rejection". And the PAQ (Personality Assessment Questionnaire) is used to measure how well a person adjusted psychologically, that means psychological adjustment. The association between Maternal acceptance and psychological adjustment were given in Table 1.

Table 1: Correlation Matrix among the Parental Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire (PARQ) sub-scale (Mother form) scores and Personality Assessment Questionnaire (PAQ) scores.

PARQ- Mother	1	2	3	4
1.Warmth	1			
2.Hostility	.589**	1		
3.Indifference	.594**	.948**	1	
4.Undifferentiated				
Rejection	.628**	.861**	.842**	1
PAQ	.536**	.538**	.544**	.588**

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

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Table 1 represents Parental Acceptance-rejection (mother version) was significantly and positively correlated with Personality Assessment. The finding shows that, the positive correlation between the subscale of PARQ (Warmth) and PAQ ($r = .536$; $p < .01$), subscale of PARQ (Hostility) and PAQ ($r = .538$; $p < .01$), subscale of PARQ (Indifference) and PAQ ($r = .544$; $p < .01$), and subscale of PARQ (Undifferentiated Rejection) and PAQ ($r = .588$; $p < .01$). That indicates that there is positive and significant relationship between maternal acceptance and psychological adjustment which means significant positive relationship between maternal rejection and psychological maladjustment. The PARQ has four subscales for father version also. The relationship between paternal acceptance-rejection and psychological adjustment were given in Table 2.

Table 2: Correlation Matrix among the Parental Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire (PARQ) sub-scale (Father form) scores and Personality Assessment Questionnaire (PAQ) scores.

PARQ- Mother	1	2	3	4
1.Warmth	1			
2.Hostility	.819**	1		
3.Indifference	.812**	.970**	1	
4.Undifferentiated				
Rejection	.519**	.513**	.528**	1
PAQ	.622**	.688**	.658**	.415**

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2, displayed that Parental Acceptance-rejection (father version) was significantly and positively correlated with Personality Assessment. Result reveals that the positive correlation between the subscale of PARQ (Warmth) and PAQ ($r = .622$; $p < .01$), subscale of PARQ (Hostility) and PAQ ($r = .688$; $p < .01$), subscale of PARQ (Indifference) and PAQ ($r = .658$; $p < .01$), and subscale of PARQ (Undifferentiated Rejection) and PAQ ($r = .415$; $p < .01$). That suggests that there is positive and significant relationship between paternal acceptance and psychological adjustment, also between paternal rejection and psychological maladjustment.

Another objective was whether there is any gender difference in parental acceptance-rejection and psychological adjustment among young adults. To show the gender differences, researcher has done t test among those variables. Young adult's t test of maternal acceptance-rejection, paternal acceptance-rejection and psychological adjustment scores for both male and female is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Descriptive statistics and gender differences in measure of Perceived maternal acceptance-rejection and paternal acceptance-rejection and psychological adjustment

	Measures	M	SD	N	t
Maternal acceptance-Rejection	Male	98.09	22.230	115	4.328**
	Female	110.95	23.354	110	
Paternal acceptance-rejection	Male	104.90	24.669	115	1.333
	female	109.23	23.944	110	
psychological adjustment	Male	132.03	19.446	115	2.640**
	Female	138.71	18.435	110	

** $p < 0.01$, $df = 223$

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Table 3 shows that, male ($M=98.09$, $SD=22.230$) perceived their mother fairly accepted than female ($M=110.95$, $SD=23.354$). There are significant gender differences ($t= 4.328$) in maternal acceptance. But no significant differences were found in perceived paternal acceptance in respect of gender. In psychological adjustment male ($M=132.03$, $SD=19.446$) shows more adjusted than female ($M=138.71$, $SD=18.435$), there are significant gender differences ($t= 2.640$) in psychological adjustment.

DISCUSSION

The present study was conducted to investigate the relationship between Parental acceptance-rejection and psychological adjustment among Young Adults of Rajshahi City. Bangla version (Uddin et al.,2007) of PARQ (Rohner, 2005) was administered to measure the nature of parental acceptance-rejection of the participants. This study also used the Bangla version of Adult PAQ (Uddin et al.,2007) to measure psychological adjustment of the respondents respectively. Participants showed very lower maternal and paternal rejection (5.78%), that suggests most of the participants were accepted than rejected from their parents in their childhood. The result of Adults PAQ showed most of the participants (80.89% $N=192$, $Mean=129.6719$, $SD=14.21310$) were psychologically adjusted.

Table 1 represented that all the sub-dimension of Adult PARQ (mother version) is positively and significantly correlated with Adult PAQ. In mother version, the correlation between in the subscale of PARQ (Warmth) and PAQ was $.536^{**}$. The subscale of PARQ (Hostility) and PAQ show positive correlation ($.538^{**}$). And the correlation between subscale of PARQ (Indifference) and PAQ was $.544^{**}$ and subscale of PARQ (Undifferentiated Rejection) and PAQ was $.588^{**}$. The father version also showed positive relation and that is displayed in Table 2. Table 2 showed there is positive and significant relationship between the subscale of PARQ (Warmth) and PAQ ($.622^{**}$), subscale of PARQ (Hostility) and PAQ ($.688^{**}$), subscale of PARQ (Indifference) and PAQ ($.658^{**}$), and subscale of PARQ (Undifferentiated Rejection) and PAQ ($.415^{**}$). From those findings we can tell that there is significant positive association between psychological adjustment and perceived parental acceptance of young adults. From the perspective of social learning theory, it has been shown that adolescent psychological adjustment will get in jeopardy position when they don't get proper acceptance from parents. It is believed that excessive parental influence in childhood, is a threat of maladaptive behavioral responses, cognitive biases and catastrophic interpretations of adult (Barrett, Rapee, Dadds, et. al. 1996). On the other side, when kids get proper acceptance, that makes them valuable and strong, so that they easily adjust with challenging environment and demanding circumstances.

The last objective was to see is any significant difference in parental acceptance-rejection and psychological adjustment in respect of gender. The findings of Table 3 show that, male ($M=98.09$, $SD=22.230$) perceived their mother more accepted than female ($M=110.95$, $SD=23.354$). That means there is significant gender difference ($t =4.321$) in maternal acceptance. There may some cause of that, in Bangladeshi culture generally parents expect a boy child, they think a boy will be taken care of them in future. Specially, the women like mother, grandmother they think a boy is a pride, and a girl is shame. Many mothers are being tortured because they gave birth a girl child. All these incidents may impact on maternal acceptance and rejection. Table 3 again propose no significant gender difference in perceived paternal acceptance. Although the mean scores of male respondents (104.90) are lower than female respondents (109.23), but that doesn't represent significant gender difference. That means both male and female perceived their father fairly accepted.

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Table 3 also show that, in psychological adjustment male ($M=132.03$, $SD=19.446$) exhibit more adjustment than female ($M=138.71$, $SD=18.435$), that suggest there are significant gender differences ($t=2.640$). From some previous study it is assumed that male has adjusted well than female, the reason both psychological and physical. Women exhibit more stress, and sometimes unable to deal with challenging environment. Sometimes they are very dependent on others.

Limitation of the Study

The present study attempted to follow a well-founded method and data analysis, but there remain some limitations also. There are several limitations in this study. Those are following:

1. The sample size was very small only 225, that does not represent the young adult of Rajshahi city.
2. The samples are collected by using purposive sampling, there was no random selection. That's why all the population of the study hadn't get equal opportunity.
3. There were so many questions in those questionnaires, so that it took a long time to complete the answers. For this many participants could not concentrate well on this.
4. Since it is a cross-sectional study, it is impossible to know about the overall relationship of childhood to youth among the participants and their parent. It just gives a glimpse about this topic.

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Acknowledgement

The author(s) appreciates all those who participated in the study and helped to facilitate the research process.

Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

How to cite this article: Noori, M. & Siddique, N E A (2023). Parental Acceptance-Rejection and Psychological Adjustment among Young Adults. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 11(1), 201-211. DIP:18.01.022.20231101, DOI:10.25215/1101.022