

Research Paper

A Study on the Impact of Parental Acceptance/Rejection on Emotion Regulation and Perfectionism on Young Adults

Suchismita Bag^{1*}, Dr. Annie Khanam²

ABSTRACT

The present study aimed to examine the relationship between perceived parental rejection, difficulties in emotion regulation, and perfectionism among young adults. Early parental experiences play a significant role in shaping emotional and personality development. The study sought to explore whether combined parental rejection (mother and father) was associated with higher levels of emotional dysregulation and perfectionistic tendencies. A sample of 200 participants was selected using convenience sampling. Data were collected manually through standardized self-report questionnaires, including the Parental Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire (Mother and Father versions), the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale (DERS-16), and the Frost Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale. Total scores were computed according to the respective scoring guidelines. Descriptive statistics and Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation analysis were conducted to examine relationships among the variables. The results revealed a significant moderate positive correlation between parental rejection and difficulties in emotion regulation, $r(198) = .43, p < .001$. Additionally, parental rejection was significantly positively correlated with perfectionism, $r(198) = .47, p < .001$. These findings indicate that higher perceived parental rejection is associated with greater emotional dysregulation and increased perfectionistic tendencies. The study highlights the enduring influence of parental experiences on emotional functioning and personality development. The findings underscore the importance of parental warmth and acceptance in fostering adaptive emotional regulation and healthy self-standards. Implications for clinical practice and future research are discussed.

Keywords: Parental Rejection, Emotion Regulation, Perfectionism, Young Adults, Emotional Dysregulation

The quality of parents' relationships with their children shapes psychological development over the long term. Among various theories on parental influence, Parental Acceptance-Rejection Theory (PARTheory) stands out for its comprehensive explanation of how parental acceptance and rejection affect offspring. Accepting parents show verbal and physical warmth that makes children feel truly loved. In contrast, rejecting parents display hostility or indifference, leaving children starved for affection. PARTheory, as a theory of socialization, unpacks both the roots of parental

¹MA Clinical Psychology, Amity Institute of Psychology & Allied Sciences, Amity University Noida, UP.

²Assistant Professor (II), Amity Institute of Psychology & Allied Sciences, Amity University Noida, UP.

*Corresponding Author

Received: August 12, 2026; Revision Received: September 03, 2026; Accepted: September 07, 2026

© 2026, Bag, S. & Khanam, A.; licensee IJIP. This is an Open Access Research distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (www.creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any Medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

A Study on the Impact of Parental Acceptance/Rejection on Emotion Regulation and Perfectionism on Young Adults

acceptance or rejection—rooted in psychological, environmental, and coping factors—and their lasting impact on children. It also reveals why some children prove more resilient to rejection than others. Recently, the framework has evolved into Interpersonal Acceptance-Rejection Theory (IPARTheory), broadening its lens to all key relationships beyond parenting. This dissertation focuses on PARTheory's core parental acceptance-rejection subdomain, drawing on its three subtheories to illuminate processes and outcomes. We begin by clarifying the "warmth dimension" of parenting, which anchors the theory's view of acceptance and rejection. This warmth dimension forms a continuum where everyone falls somewhere, shaped by the affection received from primary caregivers in early life. It captures the depth of emotional bonds between parents and children, expressed through verbal, physical, or symbolic means. At one pole lies parental acceptance: the nurturing flow of warmth, care, comfort, support, and love from parents or caregivers. The opposite pole marks rejection—a significant withdrawal of these elements, often paired with behaviors that inflict physical or psychological harm. Cross-cultural research spanning fifty years identifies four primary faces of rejection: (1) coldness and lack of affection (versus warmth); (2) hostility and aggression; (3) indifference and neglect; and (4) undifferentiated rejection, where children simply feel unloved, even without overt signs. Parents might come across as hostile—angry, bitter, or irritable—or as indifferent, showing little investment in their child's well-being. Loving parents, by contrast, channel their warmth into actions: comforting words, hugs, or culturally resonant gestures. The link between internal indifference and outward neglect isn't always straightforward; parents might neglect out of anger rather than apathy. Yet neglect goes beyond unmet physical needs—it signals emotional absence, like ignoring pleas for comfort or staying psychologically distant. Even in loving homes, children encounter these pains occasionally. Importantly, PARTheory views acceptance-rejection through dual lenses: objective behaviors (as observers note them) and subjective experience (as children perceive them). These perspectives usually align, but when they clash, the child's lived reality takes precedence (Rohner, 1986).

This is accurate since external observers could miss any overt signs of parental rejection, even though a child may feel unwanted (as in undifferentiated rejection). On the other hand, the child might not feel rejected even while witnesses claim a high level of parental abuse or neglect. Reports of child abuse and neglect frequently include this. Therefore, there is only a problematic relationship between children's views of parental acceptance or rejection and so-called "objective" claims of abuse, rejection, and neglect. According to Kagan (1978), "parental rejection is not a specific set of actions by parents but a belief held by the child."

Parental acceptance or rejection is essentially symbolic. Therefore, one must comprehend the symbolic nature of rejection in order to comprehend why it consistently affects both children and adults. To completely understand the acceptance-rejection process in ethnic and cross-cultural studies, researchers must undoubtedly make an effort to appreciate people's symbolic, culturally-based interpretations of parents' love-related acts. In other words, while parents everywhere may show some degree of acceptance (warmth, affection, care, concern) and rejection (coldness, lack of affection, hostility, aggression, indifference, neglect), the ways in which they do so vary greatly and are often infused with cultural or even peculiar meanings. (Kagan, 1978)

The personality subtheory of PARTheory is by far its most advanced component. All five of the aforementioned study types provide evidence supporting that subtheory. However, due to their simplicity and resilience, numerous researchers worldwide have opted to employ the

A Study on the Impact of Parental Acceptance/Rejection on Emotion Regulation and Perfectionism on Young Adults

PAQ, PARQ/Control, and PARQ with tens of thousands of adolescents and adults from various ethnic groups and societies on every continent except Antarctica. These studies have produced more evidence than any other group of measurements. The findings of these investigations are hence the focus of this article. Almost all research has come to the same conclusion: the type of psychological adjustment (or maladjustment) proposed in personality subtheory is typically linked to the experience of parental acceptance (or rejection). For instance, the previously described meta-analysis of 43 studies using the PARQ and PAQ that drew from 7,563 respondents worldwide revealed that 3,433 more studies—all of which had nonsignificant results—would be needed to refute the conclusion that perceived acceptance or rejection is panculturally associated with children's psychological adjustment; 941 such studies would be needed to refute the conclusion among adults. The meta-analysis revealed that every effect magnitude was statistically significant. Furthermore, neither cross-culturally nor within American ethnic groups did the results indicate any significant variability in impact sizes. (Khaleque, 2002)

A major meta-analysis shows that perceived parental acceptance or rejection explains about 26% of the variation in children's psychological adjustment and 21% in adults', regardless of culture, ethnicity, or location. This backs PARTheory's view: the link peaks in childhood, when parents hold direct sway, then softens in adulthood. Still, much remains unexplained—behavioral, cultural, genetic, and learning factors fill the gaps (Reiss et. al. 1988).

PARTheory's personality subtheory gains further traction from controlled comparisons, ethnographic cases, and holocultural surveys. For instance, Rohner's 1975 study of 101 non-industrial societies confirmed a pancultural tie between acceptance-rejection and adjustment. Similar patterns emerged in West Bengal, India and a biracial Georgia community (Veneziano & Rohner, 1998).

This body of evidence led Rohner to define the "acceptance-rejection syndrome"—a relational diagnosis blending two clusters. First, nearly 500 studies cluster rejection into four global perceptions: coldness, hostility/aggression, indifference/neglect, and undifferentiated rejection. Second, cross-cultural data links these to specific maladjustments outlined in the personality subtheory. Together, they form a syndrome: a constellation of intertwined traits like anger or hostility that recur across contexts. Beyond core adjustment issues, parental rejection correlates universally with three more mental health challenges: (1) depression, (2) behavioral problems like conduct disorders or delinquency, and (3) substance abuse (Rohner & Britner, 2002).

Parental rejection consistently predicts depressed mood across U.S. ethnic groups and nations like Australia, China, Egypt, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Sweden, and Turkey (Perris et al., 1986).

Rejection foreshadows conduct issues, externalizing behaviors, and delinquency worldwide—from Bahrain and China to Croatia, Egypt, England, India, and Norway—and across U.S. groups. Long-term studies confirm rejection precedes these problems (Rohner & Britner, 2002).

The pattern holds for drugs and alcohol in Australia, Canada, England, the Netherlands, Sweden, and U.S. ethnic groups. Some studies even imply causation (Rohner & Britner, 2002).

A Study on the Impact of Parental Acceptance/Rejection on Emotion Regulation and Perfectionism on Young Adults

Evidence across these domains shows fatherly acceptance-rejection often matches maternal influence on well-being, personality, mental health, conduct, substance use, and delinquency. Advanced stats like regression and structural equation modeling highlight fathers' unique, sometimes dominant, contributions (Veneziano, 2003).

Research on parental acceptance-rejection dates to the 1890s, solidifying in the 1930s with ~3,000 studies. Key advances include Schaefer's CRPBI and Siegelman's Parent-Child Relations Questionnaire (Roe & Siegelman, 1963).

Have you ever chased a goal only to feel it still wasn't enough? That's perfectionism in action—showing up in relationships, school, work, or even simple daily tasks. It can spark ambition and precision, yet when it turns rigid, it fuels stress, procrastination, and burnout. At heart, perfectionism drives people to demand unrealistically high—or even flawless—standards from themselves or others, far beyond what's needed (Frost et al., 1990).

Perfectionists wrestle with a relentless inner critic that zooms in on flaws, dreads mistakes as disasters (often leading to avoidance), stakes their self-worth on outcomes, and struggles to celebrate real wins. Healthy ambition, on the other hand, chases bold but doable goals, learns from stumbles, values effort over flawlessness, and blends drive with self-compassion (Stoeber & Otto, 2006).

Adaptive vs. Maladaptive Perfectionism

Someone with adaptive perfectionism might aim for top-tier work, accept that "good enough" has limits, and use feedback to grow. Maladaptive perfectionism, though, clings to unbreakable rules, unleashes brutal self-judgment, and sees anything short of perfect as total failure. This breeds fear of judgment, procrastination, frustration, and exhaustion—people delay starting tasks, dreading they won't hit impossible bars, or brush off successes as "not quite there."

Perfectionism arises from a tangle of influences: personality, culture, genes, and family dynamics. Kids often pick up maladaptive perfectionism from perfectionist parents or harsh, high-demand parenting with little warmth. Constant criticism, achievement-tied praise, or being forced into adult roles early on can teach that love must be earned through perfection (Carmo et al., 2021).

Some are wired for it—high conscientiousness, achievement hunger, or mistake sensitivity amps vulnerability, especially under pressure. Twin studies peg 20–30% of traits like "concern over mistakes" as heritable (Tozzi et al., 2004).

Cutthroat schools, success-obsessed cultures, and social media's highlight reels stoke it—especially "socially prescribed perfectionism," where people feel others demand flawlessness from them. Nature loads the gun, but nurture pulls the trigger: genes set predispositions, yet parenting, norms, and systems decide if it blooms as healthy drive or toxic rigidity (Iranzo-Tatay et al., 2015).

Perfectionism doesn't just tag along with issues—it drives them as a transdiagnostic factor across disorders. It fans chronic anxiety and failure fears. Socially prescribed perfectionism strongly predicts youth anxiety, with students stressing over imagined criticism for slip-ups. Tying worth to wins means "failures" spark despair and self-attack. Perfectionistic worries—

A Study on the Impact of Parental Acceptance/Rejection on Emotion Regulation and Perfectionism on Young Adults

like obsessing over errors—predict depression via stress and isolation, eroding resilience over time. Self-esteem hangs on performance, heightening critique sensitivity and straining bonds—especially when perfectionists push rigid standards onto others. It mirrors OCD: nagging doubts about "doing it right" trigger checking or redoing. Perfectionistic beliefs—like inflating mistake consequences—both spark and sustain these patterns. Unrealistic pursuits lead to burnout's exhaustion and cynicism. Fear of imperfection ironically delays action—short-term anxiety relief, long-term shame spiral. This loop can freeze people entirely, too overwhelmed to start (Shafran et al., 2002).

Huang et al. examined the longitudinal relationship between parental acceptance and preadolescent emotion regulation within the cultural context of China, addressing a notable gap in developmental research that has predominantly relied on Western, cross-sectional samples. The study included a large sample of 1,987 middle school students from Guangdong and Shandong provinces and followed participants across three time points, from the beginning of seventh grade to the start of eighth grade. Using a cross-lagged panel model with random intercepts, the researchers distinguished stable between-person differences from dynamic within-person changes over time. Results indicated that paternal and maternal acceptance were significantly associated with adaptive emotion regulation at the between-person level. However, no statistically significant within-person cross-lagged effects were observed. Fluctuations in parental acceptance did not predict subsequent changes in adolescents' emotion regulation, nor did adolescents' emotional functioning significantly influence later parental acceptance. These findings challenge assumptions regarding the universality of the Tripartite Model by suggesting that, within Chinese preadolescents, the association between parenting and emotion regulation may be driven more by stable trait-like differences than by short-term transactional processes. The study highlights the importance of cultural context and methodological rigor in evaluating developmental theories of emotional socialization. (Huang et al., 2024)

Alçin, Faraji, and Tezcan conducted an extensive investigation into the long-term psychological effects of early caregiving by examining the relationship between perceived parental acceptance–rejection and emotion regulation skills among adult women who are mothers. The study is notable for its focus on the intergenerational transmission of emotional functioning. Using a sample of 300 women, the researchers assessed participants' retrospective perceptions of childhood parental behavior and their current emotion regulation capacities. Measures included the Parental Acceptance–Rejection Scale (PARS) and the Emotion Regulation Difficulties Questionnaire (ERDQ), along with socio-demographic variables such as age, education, marital status, and socio-economic status. Statistical analyses conducted using SPSS 23.0 revealed a significant positive association between perceived parental rejection and greater difficulties in emotion regulation. Women who reported experiences of parental coldness, aggression, or neglect demonstrated higher levels of emotional dysregulation in adulthood, suggesting that early family emotional climate forms a foundational template for later emotional competence. Additionally, socio-demographic factors appeared to play a role; participants with higher educational attainment reported lower levels of perceived parental rejection compared to those with lower levels of education. These findings suggest that education may either facilitate cognitive reframing of childhood experiences or reflect more supportive early environments. Overall, the study supports the proposition that subjective perceptions of parental communication significantly influence long-term emotional functioning and may have implications for intergenerational patterns of emotional socialization. (Alçin et al., 2022)

A Study on the Impact of Parental Acceptance/Rejection on Emotion Regulation and Perfectionism on Young Adults

Tahan and Seyed Mousavi examined the relationship between perceived parental dynamics and adolescent psychological outcomes, with particular emphasis on the moderating role of reflective functioning. Employing a correlational research design, the study included 400 Iranian adolescents aged 14 to 18 years, selected through convenience sampling. Participants completed online measures including the Parental Acceptance–Rejection Questionnaire, the Reflective Functioning Questionnaire, and the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale. Structural equation modeling (SEM) was used to examine the pathways linking parental treatment, reflective functioning, and emotion regulation difficulties. Results indicated a significant positive association between perceived parental rejection and emotional dysregulation, consistent with developmental frameworks highlighting the detrimental effects of hostile or rejecting parenting. Importantly, the study identified differential roles of the two dimensions of reflective functioning—certainty and uncertainty. While reflective uncertainty was positively associated with emotion regulation difficulties, it did not moderate the relationship between parental rejection and emotional outcomes. In contrast, reflective certainty significantly moderated this association, such that adolescents with higher reflective certainty were better able to buffer the negative impact of perceived parental rejection. These findings suggest that reflective functioning operates as a psychological protective factor, enhancing adolescents’ resilience in the face of adverse parental environments. The study further emphasizes clinical implications, proposing that interventions aimed at strengthening mentalization and reflective capacities in adolescents and parents may mitigate the adverse emotional consequences of perceived parental rejection. (Tahan & Seyed Mousavi, 2024)

A study was conducted on an extensive investigation into the multifaceted predictors of psychopathic tendencies among adolescents within the socio-cultural landscape of Pakistan. The primary objective of the research was to map the complex intersections between childhood trauma, psychological adjustment, emotion regulation, and perceived parental acceptance-rejection. To achieve this, the researchers utilized a substantial sample of 600 adolescents (consisting of 281 males and 319 females) aged 13 to 17, recruited from both public and private educational institutions across three major cities in Punjab: Lahore, Gujrat, and Sialkot. The study employed a rigorous psychometric battery, including translated versions of the Childhood Trauma Questionnaire, the Personality Assessment Questionnaire, and the Youth Psychopathic Trait Inventory, alongside Rohner's Parental Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire. The statistical findings highlighted that overall psychological maladjustment served as the most robust predictor of psychopathic tendencies within the general sample. However, the study revealed significant gender-based nuances in how these developmental factors manifest. For male adolescents, deficits in emotion regulation emerged as the most significant predictor of psychopathic traits. In contrast, for female adolescents, the perception of maternal acceptance-rejection was the primary predictive factor. This suggests that the etiology of psychopathic tendencies may be gender-contingent, with males being more influenced by internal emotional processing and females being more sensitive to the maternal relational bond. Furthermore, the research identified several critical demographic determinants that influenced these psychological outcomes. Factors such as the adolescent's age, parental education levels, the father's profession, and the family's monthly income were all found to be significant variables in the development of psychopathic tendencies. By situating the study within the Pakistani context, they emphasize that the development of severe behavioral traits is not merely an individual psychological phenomenon but is deeply embedded in the intersection of family dynamics, socio-economic status, and gendered socialization. This study provides a vital cross-cultural perspective,

A Study on the Impact of Parental Acceptance/Rejection on Emotion Regulation and Perfectionism on Young Adults

suggesting that interventions for high-risk youth must be tailored to both the specific gender of the adolescent and the broader socio-economic realities of the family unit.(Walayat and Butt, 2017)

Anwaar and Qurat-ul-Ain conducted a cross-sectional study to evaluate the psychological repercussions of parental acceptance and rejection among young adults in Pakistan, specifically focusing on the outcomes of social anxiety and emotion regulation. The research utilized a gender-balanced sample of 200 university students from Rawalpindi and Islamabad, aged 18 to 25. By employing a suite of validated instruments—including the Parental Acceptance/Rejection Questionnaire (PARQ-SF), the Liebowitz Social Anxiety Scale (LSAS), and the Difficulty in Emotion Regulation Scale (DERS)—the authors aimed to determine if individual resilience serves as a significant moderator in these relationships. The statistical results, derived through Pearson's correlation and multivariate linear regression, demonstrated a profound link between familial dynamics and mental health. Parental acceptance was found to be a significant predictor of lower social anxiety, enhanced emotion regulation, and higher levels of resilience. Conversely, perceived parental rejection was positively correlated with both social anxiety ($r=.373, p<.01$) and difficulties in regulating emotions ($r=.771, p<.01$). These findings suggest that as parental warmth decreases, individuals experience an increased fear of social judgment and a diminished capacity to manage their emotional responses effectively. A critical contribution of this study is the identification of resilience as a potent moderating factor. The analysis indicated that while parental rejection generally exerts a negative influence on emotional well-being, the presence of high individual resilience can mitigate these adverse effects. Specifically, participants with high levels of resilience exhibited a different relationship between parental rejection and social anxiety compared to those with low resilience, suggesting that the ability to "bounce back" from adversity serves as a protective buffer. The authors conclude that because parental influence significantly shapes long-term psychological functioning, targeted interventions should focus on fostering resilience in young adults to counteract the deficits associated with a rejecting childhood environment. (Anwaar and Qurat-ul-Ain, 2023)

Objective

To study the impact of Parent Acceptance/Rejection on Emotion Regulation and Perfectionism.

Hypotheses

1. There will be significant impact Parent Acceptance/Rejection on Emotion Regulation and Perfectionism
2. There will be no significant difference of Parental Acceptance/Rejection on Emotion Regulation and Perfectionism

Sample and Sample Design

The sampling method used for the study is Convenience Sampling. This method is used to ensure the generalizability of research finding to the broader population. The sample was focused on adults ages from 18-35years. The study was conducted among 200 people.

Psychometric Instruments

The present study employed three validated self-report measures to assess parental patterns, emotional regulation, and perfectionistic traits.

A Study on the Impact of Parental Acceptance/Rejection on Emotion Regulation and Perfectionism on Young Adults

To evaluate perceptions of parental treatment, the Parental Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire – Short Form (PARQ-SF) was utilized. This 24-item instrument measures four dimensions of perceived parenting: Warmth/Affection, Hostility/Aggression, Indifference/Neglect, and Undifferentiated Rejection. Participants responded via a 4-point Likert scale (1 = *Almost Never True* to 4 = *Almost Always True*). The PARQ-SF demonstrates excellent psychometric stability across diverse populations. Internal consistency for the total scale is consistently high, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients typically ranging from .86 to .95 across its various versions (Mother, Father, and Adult). Its validity is supported by strong correlations with the Personality Assessment Questionnaire (PAQ), confirming its concurrent validity in measuring the psychological adjustment of individuals in relation to perceived parental acceptance or rejection. Furthermore, its transcultural validity has been established through extensive studies in over 60 countries, proving its effectiveness regardless of cultural background.

To assess Emotional Regulation, the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale – Short Form (DERS-16) was administered. This 16-item scale provides a comprehensive look at emotional dysregulation across five domains: Clarity, Goals, Impulse, Strategies, and Non-acceptance. Items are scored on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *Almost Never* to 5 = *Almost Always*). The DERS-16 maintains the high reliability of the original 36-item version while offering a reduced respondent burden. It exhibits excellent internal consistency, with a total score alpha usually reported at .92 or higher, and subscale reliabilities ranging from .79 to .91. The scale demonstrates strong criterion-related validity, as it correlates significantly with measures of negative affect and experiential avoidance. Research indicates that the DERS-16 possesses strong test-retest reliability ($r = .85$ over a few weeks), ensuring that the scores are stable indicators of an individual's emotion regulation abilities over time.

Perfectionistic tendencies were measured using the Frost Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (FMPS). The FMPS consists of 35 items categorized into six subscales: Concern over Mistakes, Personal Standards, Parental Expectations, Parental Criticism, Doubts about Actions, and Organization. Participants indicated their agreement on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 5 = *Strongly Agree*). The scale is widely recognized in clinical research for its ability to differentiate between adaptive and maladaptive perfectionism, showing high internal consistency and strong correlations with measures of anxiety and depression. The FMPS is recognized for its strong internal reliability, particularly within the Concern over Mistakes and Personal Standards subscales, where alpha coefficients often exceed .90. The total scale reliability is generally reported around .90. In terms of validity, the FMPS demonstrates high convergent validity through its significant associations with the Hewitt & Flett MPS, as well as various measures of psychopathology such as the BDI (Beck Depression Inventory). Factor analytic studies have consistently supported its multidimensional structure, confirming the construct validity of the six-factor model in both clinical and non-clinical samples.

Procedure

The sample was obtained using a convenience sampling technique. The study aims and procedures were described to them and written consent obtained prior to the data collection. Respondents were guaranteed of anonymity and that the information gathered would solely be utilized for academic purposes.

A Study on the Impact of Parental Acceptance/Rejection on Emotion Regulation and Perfectionism on Young Adults

Data were collected via a paper-pencil questionnaire that included the Parental Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire (for Mother and Father), Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale – 16 items (DERS-16), and Frost Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale. The questionnaires were presented in paper and pencil. After attentively reading each statement, participants were asked to honestly react based on their personal experiences. There were no right or incorrect responses, they were told. It took about 20 to 30 minutes on average to finish the questions.

Following completion, the replies were examined for accuracy. The total scores for each scale were calculated in accordance with the corresponding scoring guidelines, and reverse-scored items were scored properly. After being input into Microsoft Excel, the data was further examined using the proper statistical methods. Pearson's correlation analysis and descriptive statistics were used to investigate the connections between perfectionism, emotion control issues, and parental rejection.

After being coded and imported into Microsoft Excel, the gathered data was then subjected to the proper statistical analysis. The data were checked for missing values and accuracy of scoring before inferential statistics were performed. Total scores were determined for all scales, and reverse-scored items were calculated in accordance with the corresponding scoring standards.

To comprehend the general features of the sample, descriptive statistics were calculated for each of the main variables, such as mean, standard deviation, minimum, and maximum scores. Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to analyze the correlations between the variables. The association between perfectionism, emotion control issues, and combined parental rejection (father and mother) was evaluated using correlation analysis.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were calculated for the key study variables: maternal rejection (PARQ_M), paternal rejection (PARQ_F), difficulties in emotion regulation (ER), and perfectionism (PER). The full sample of N = 200 participants was included in all analyses. These results appear in Table 1.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables
Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
PARQ_M_TOTAL	200	24.00	92.00	48.4950	15.18098
PARQ_F_TOTAL	200	28.00	96.00	51.8550	15.46122
ER_TOTAL	200	16.00	80.00	43.4950	14.22539
PER_TOTAL	200	67.00	174.00	114.3650	20.25917
Valid N (listwise)	200				

On average, participants reported moderate levels of perceived maternal rejection ($M = 48.50$, $SD = 15.18$), with scores ranging from 24.00 to 92.00. Paternal rejection scores were slightly higher ($M = 51.86$, $SD = 15.46$), spanning 28.00 to 96.00. For psychological outcomes, difficulties in emotion regulation averaged 43.50 ($SD = 14.23$), covering the full

A Study on the Impact of Parental Acceptance/Rejection on Emotion Regulation and Perfectionism on Young Adults

possible range of 16.00 to 80.00. Perfectionism scores averaged 114.37 (SD = 20.26), from a low of 67.00 to a high of 174.00.

Correlation between Variables

The moderate variability across these measures (as indicated by the standard deviations) reflects a diverse sample, making it well-suited for subsequent inferential analyses.

Table 2 *Correlation matrix for the study variables*
Correlations

		PARQ_M_ TOTAL	PARQ_F_ TOTAL	ER_ TOTAL	PER_ TOTAL
PARQ_M_ TOTAL	Pearson Correlation	1	.491**	.365**	.303**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	200	200	200	200
PARQ_F_ TOTAL	Pearson Correlation	.491**	1	.386**	.340**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	200	200	200	200
ER_TOTAL	Pearson Correlation	.365**	.386**	1	.517**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	200	200	200	200
PER_TOTAL	Pearson Correlation	.303**	.340**	.517**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	200	200	200	200

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

Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated to assess relationships among the study variables, with results summarized in Table 2. All variables showed positive and significant correlations at the ($p < .01$) level.

In particular, maternal rejection positively correlated with difficulties in emotion regulation ($r = 0.37$, $p < .001$) and perfectionism ($r = .30$, $p < .001$). Paternal rejection displayed a comparable pattern, linking significantly to difficulties in emotion regulation ($r = .39$, $p < .001$) and perfectionism ($r = .34$, $p < .001$).

The strongest association emerged between difficulties in emotion regulation and perfectionism ($r = .52$, $p < .001$), indicating that greater struggles with emotion regulation often align with elevated perfectionistic tendencies. Maternal and paternal rejection also correlated positively with each other ($r = .49$, $p < .001$).

DISCUSSION

The present study aimed to examine the relationship between perceived parental rejection (maternal and paternal), difficulties in emotion regulation, and perfectionism among young adults. The descriptive statistics indicated moderate levels across the primary study variables, suggesting meaningful variability within the sample. Participants reported moderate levels of perceived maternal rejection ($M = 48.50$, $SD = 15.18$) with scores ranging from 24.00 to 92.00, while paternal rejection scores were slightly higher ($M = 51.86$, $SD = 15.46$), ranging from 28.00 to 96.00. Similarly, the mean score for difficulties in emotion regulation was 43.50 ($SD = 14.23$), spanning the full possible range of 16.00 to 80.00. Perfectionism scores averaged 114.37 ($SD = 20.26$), with values ranging from 67.00 to 174.00. The presence of moderate standard deviations across all measures indicates that the sample captured diverse experiences of parental relationships as well as differences in

A Study on the Impact of Parental Acceptance/Rejection on Emotion Regulation and Perfectionism on Young Adults

emotional and personality characteristics, thereby providing a suitable basis for examining relationships among the variables.

The correlational analysis revealed several statistically significant relationships among the study variables. Specifically, perceived maternal rejection demonstrated a moderate positive correlation with difficulties in emotion regulation ($r = .37, p < .001$) and a significant positive correlation with perfectionism ($r = .30, p < .001$). Similarly, perceived paternal rejection also showed a *moderate positive association* with difficulties in emotion regulation ($r = .39, p < .001$) and perfectionism ($r = .34, p < .001$). These findings suggest that individuals who perceived greater rejection from their parents were more likely to report increased challenges in managing and regulating their emotional experiences, as well as higher levels of perfectionistic tendencies.

These findings are consistent with theoretical frameworks such as attachment theory and Parental Acceptance–Rejection Theory (PARTheory), both of which emphasize the importance of parental warmth, acceptance, and responsiveness in fostering healthy emotional development. When children grow up perceiving rejection, criticism, or emotional neglect from caregivers, they may struggle to develop effective emotional regulation strategies. As a result, these individuals may carry forward difficulties in identifying, understanding, and managing emotions into adulthood.

Furthermore, the results revealed that difficulties in emotion regulation and perfectionism were strongly and positively correlated ($r = .52, p < .001$), representing the strongest association among the variables in the study. This finding suggests that individuals who experience greater challenges in regulating their emotions may also be more likely to develop rigid standards, heightened self-criticism, and maladaptive perfectionistic tendencies. Perfectionism may therefore function as a coping mechanism aimed at achieving control, avoiding criticism, or gaining approval that may have been lacking in earlier parental relationships.

Additionally, maternal and paternal rejection were moderately and positively correlated with each other ($r = .49, p < .001$), indicating that participants who perceived rejection from one parent were also more likely to perceive similar patterns from the other parent. Overall, the findings of the present study highlight the significant role of perceived parental rejection in shaping emotional regulation capacities and perfectionistic personality tendencies, underscoring the long-term psychological implications of early parent–child relational experiences.

CONCLUSION

The current study looked at the connection between young people's perfectionism, emotional control issues, and perceived parental rejection. The results showed that both emotion regulation issues and perfectionistic inclinations were significantly positively correlated with parental rejection. In particular, emotional dysregulation and perfectionism were linked to higher levels of felt parental rejection. These findings highlight how early parenting experiences have a lasting psychological influence on a child's subsequent emotional and personality development. The results imply that perceived rejection may be a contributing factor to maladaptive emotional patterns and strict self-standards, which is in line with theoretical viewpoints that highlight the importance of parental warmth and acceptance in promoting adaptive functioning.

A Study on the Impact of Parental Acceptance/Rejection on Emotion Regulation and Perfectionism on Young Adults

Limitations

These insights come with caveats. Self-report surveys can invite biases, like downplaying issues for social appeal. The cross-sectional snapshot prevents firm causal claims—we can't say rejection *causes* these outcomes. Plus, our convenience sampling via manual collection limits how widely we can apply the results.

Directions for Future Research

To build on this, longitudinal studies could track these variables over time, clarifying cause and effect. Probing mediators like attachment styles or self-esteem would sharpen the picture. And drawing from broader, diverse groups would boost generalizability. By providing empirical evidence of the correlation between parental rejection and important psychological concepts related to mental health, the study adds to the body of current knowledge. The results emphasize how crucial it is to take into account early familial interactions in order to comprehend emotional regulation issues and perfectionistic tendencies. The study offers valuable insights, but causal interpretations are limited by its cross-sectional design and reliance on self-report measures. However, the findings highlight the need for more investigation into underlying processes and potential mediating factors. In conclusion, the study reaffirms how important parental acceptance is for fostering adaptive personality traits and good emotional development. Therapy settings that aim to improve emotional regulation and reduce dysfunctional perfectionism may benefit from addressing maladaptive beliefs of parental rejection.

REFERENCES

- Alçin, S., Faraji, S., & Tezcan, A. E. (2022). The relationship between adult women's perceptions of parental acceptance-rejection and their emotion regulation skills. *Current Psychology*, 41(8), 5345–5353. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-020-01046-5>
- Anwaar, A., & Qurat-ul-Ain, A. (2023). Effect of parental acceptance/rejection on social anxiety and difficulty in emotion regulation: Considering resilience as moderator. *Journal of Asian Development Studies*, 12(3), 272–283. <https://doi.org/10.62345/jads.2023.12.3.20>
- Appleton, P. R., Hall, H. K., & Hill, A. P. (2010). Family patterns of perfectionism: An examination of elite junior athletes and their parents. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, 11(5), 363–371. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychsport.2010.04.005>
- Aydal, Z., & Güloğlu, B. (2025). Suicide probability in university students: The role of parental rejection-acceptance, emotional and social loneliness, psychological flexibility. *Turkish Psychological Counseling and Guidance Journal*, 15(77), 404–428. <https://doi.org/10.17066/tpdrd.1586806>
- Deveci Şirin, H. (2019). Parental acceptance-rejection and adult separation anxiety: The mediation of adult attachment insecurity. *SAGE Open*, 9(4), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244019885138>
- Hoffmann, J. M. (2019). *Parental rejection and acceptance and youth internalizing symptoms: The roles of emotion regulation and close friend support* [Doctoral dissertation, Texas Tech University]. Texas Tech University Libraries.
- Horn, K. (2022). *Parental acceptance or rejection of gender variant youth: Implications for young adult attachment anxiety* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Illinois Chicago]. UIC Digital Repository.
- Huang, J., Ma, S., & Zhao, G. (2024). Preadolescent-perceived parental acceptance and rejection and emotion regulation: A cross-lagged panel analysis. *The Journal of Early Adolescence*, 44(6), 844–866. <https://doi.org/10.1177/02724316231191060>

A Study on the Impact of Parental Acceptance/Rejection on Emotion Regulation and Perfectionism on Young Adults

- Kagan, J. (1974). *Discrepancy, temperament, and infant distress*. In M. Lewis & L. Rosenblum (Eds.), *The effect of the infant on its caregiver* (pp. 229–248).
- Kagan, J. (1978). *The child's formation of a self-concept*. In J. Kagan (Ed.), *Human behavior: A readings anthology* (p. 61).
- Khaleque, A., & Rohner, R. P. (2002a). Perceived parental acceptance-rejection and psychological adjustment: A meta-analysis of cross-cultural studies. *Cross-Cultural Research*, 36(4), 319–340.
- Rohner, R. P. (1960). *Parental acceptance-rejection and personality development in a Pacific culture*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Harvard University.
- Rohner, R. P., Bourque, S. L., & Elordi, C. A. (1996). *Parental acceptance-rejection and risky sexual behavior in biracial adolescents in the southeastern United States*. Unpublished manuscript, University of Connecticut.
- Rohner, R. P., & Chaki-Sircar, M. (1988). *Women and children in a Bengali village*. University Press of New England.
- Saudino, K. J. (1997). Family influences on personality: Genetic and environmental mechanisms. *Australian Journal of Psychology*, 49(1), 19–23.
- Tahan, M., & Seyed Mousavi, P. (2024). The moderating role of reflective functioning in the relationship between perceived parental acceptance-rejection and emotion regulation in adolescents. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Mental Health*.
- Vandewalle, J., Moens, E., & Braet, C. (2014). Comprehending emotional eating in obese youngsters: The role of parental rejection and emotion regulation. *International Journal of Obesity*, 38(4), 525–530. <https://doi.org/10.1038/ijo.2013.233>
- Veneziano, R. A., & Rohner, R. P. (1998). Perceived parental acceptance as a mediator of the relation between corporal punishment and psychological adjustment in biracial adolescents. *Cross-Cultural Research*, 32(4), 359–386.
- Walayat, S., & Butt, M. (2017). Parental acceptance-rejection, childhood trauma, emotion regulation, and psychological adjustment as the risk factors of psychopathic tendencies in adolescents of Pakistan. *International Journal of Business and Social Research*, 7(5), 45–56. <https://doi.org/10.18533/ijbsr.v7i5.1048>
- Zhang, Y., Li, S., & Wang, M. (2025). Parental acceptance-rejection and adolescent mobile phone addiction: The mediating role of emotion regulation and the moderating role of parent-child relationship. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 16, 1666593.

Acknowledgment

The satisfaction that accompanies the successful completion of any task would be incomplete without the mention of people whose ceaseless cooperation made it possible, who's constant guidance and encouragement crown all efforts with success. I would like to thank Amity University for giving me the opportunity to undertake this project. I would like to thank my faculty guide, Dr. Annie Khanam behind my successful completion of the project. Also, I would like to thank my batch mates who guided me, helped me, and gave ideas and motivation at each step.

Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

How to cite this article: Bag, S. & Khanam, A. (2026). A Study on the Impact of Parental Acceptance/Rejection on Emotion Regulation and Perfectionism on Young Adults. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 14(3), 1666-1678. DIP:18.01.148.20261403, DOI:10.25215/1403.148