



Direct and Indirect Impact of Conditional Parental Regard on Academic Disengagement among Adolescents: Mediating Role of Introjection

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Abstract- Adolescence and academic issues are the focus of ongoing research, yet there is still a need to explore adolescence in educational contexts. The present study aimed to find out the mediational role of Introjection in the relationship of conditional parental regard (CPR) on academic disengagement. The cross-sectional survey research design was employed, and Urdu translated versions of the Parental Conditional Regard (Assor et al., 2004), Internal Compulsion Scale (ICS: Deci & Ryan, 1985), Behavioral and Emotional Engagement, and Disaffection Scale (BEEES: Skinner et al., 2009), were used to collect data through purposive sampling within the range between 15-21 years ($N = 450$, $M = 19.55$, $SD = 1.69$). Pearson correlation (both mother and father) revealed that study variables were correlated in an expected direction. Further mediation analysis revealed that CPR (both mother and father) through Introjection has indirect predictive strength for academic disengagement. Findings suggest that the parenting dimension i.e., love withdrawal, promotes maladaptive behaviour among adolescents, and CPR through controlled motivation leads to an absence of motivation for academic engagement.

Keywords: conditional parental regard, Introjection, academic engagement, adolescence.

I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, investigators have devoted keen attention towards the influence of parental practices and attitudes on adolescent's psychological well-being. Empirical researches revealed that different child-rearing approaches accompanied numerous child-related outcomes like psychological well-being, academic involvement and achievement (Gable & Lutz, 2000; Martinez & Garcia, 2008; Noack, 2004). Researchers found that parental rigidity, love withdrawal, and aggression were linked with attributes like conduct issues, emotional problems such as depression, anxiety, and students' mental health (Huta, 2012; Timpano et al., 2010; Liu et al. 2002). Therefore the present study has investigated relatively new practice in parenting literature i.e., conditional parental regard (CPR: Assor et al., 2004), by examining the mediational role of Introjection between CPR and academic disengagement.

Conditional Parental Regard

Generally, parenting or child-rearing practices are considered as socialization approaches, through which parents teach their children norms, values, behaviour, and various emotional- social skills. Among other child-rearing practices, conditional parental regard is a form of parental attitude in which love, affection, and appreciation are shown towards children with conditions whether they fulfil certain expected behaviours. Assor et al., 2004 defined CPR as a social practice induced in children by parents while expressing their love and approval contingent on children's enactment of most wanted behaviours. The series of the empirical investigation conducted by Assor, et al., (2004); Roth and Assor (2012); Assor and Tal, (2012) and Wouters, et al. (2018) had analyzed the interplay of contingent parental practices and its adverse effects on the psychology of adolescents. CPR was found to be significantly related to other destructive consequences such as culpability after disappointment, transitory contentment after achievement and disapproval of feelings from parents and anger for them. Individuals facing CPR are always under pressure of something, in fear of losing

something and are like robots or puppets who have to act according to the set instructions for them (Assor & Tal, 2012; Kanat-Maymon, 2015).

While a review of empirical researches in historical sequence, classical literature like Sears, et al., 1957 and till today Wouters, et al. (2018) and Xin, et al., (2020), suggested that love withdrawal is a form of conditional worth, which is associated with low self-esteem and emotional disengagement from studies. Researchers (Helwig, 2014) also analyzed the complexity of the link concerning contingent parenting and socializing outcomes. They established the fact that use of love withdrawal was linked both to fulfilling with the implicit demand and evading the socializing agent, consequently implying indecisive feelings among adolescents. Itzhaki, et al., (2018) examined the impact of CPR on academic activities. He found that CPR was a predictor of loneliness and higher school dropouts with low mental well-being.

Furthermore, CPR also affects the process through which parents impart their thoughts, beliefs and values into children via an outside source of motivation or internal source of inspiration. The famous motivational theory i.e., "self-determination theory" (SDT: Deci & Ryan, 2000) referred to this transformation as "Introjection". According to the SDT model, during the process of Introjection, child "take in" the values and regulations (Hardy et al., 2019). Self-determination theory has distinguished the particular type of motivation which endorses behavioural, emotional, academic and social experiences leading to the corresponding mode of behavioural and affective functioning of individuals (Cordeiro et al., 2016; Lakey, et al., 2014)

Meditational Role of Introjection

SDT is an organismic dialectical theory which postulates the meditational effect of introjection (Deci & Ryan, 2008; Chen, et al., 2015). The process of introjection refers to transforms outer regulation into inner regulation, this process resulting in internally controlling regulation. Further, the behaviour is expected to be controlled by the need for feelings of general social approval and worth, those behaviours are experienced as dependent on certain displays or attributes. In other words, it is considered controlled regulation, although, it is not reliant on certain external contingencies it is reliant on internal contingencies that are associated with self-worth and societal acceptance (Assor, et al., 2004).

It has been characterized as partial internalization in which control is in an individual but not completely incorporated motivations, beliefs, and feelings that constitute the self. Therefore, subsequent behaviours are not self-governed. In Introjection process, the conditional consequences are directed by individuals to themselves. The classic examples of Introjection are conditional regard or anxiety of shame and being guilty (Ryan, & Moller, 2017; Reeve, et al., 2018). The interesting feature of Introjection resides within the self; however, it is comparatively external to the self and not the stable form of regulation (Holding, et al., 2019)

SDT further explains the relationship between CPR and Introjection; that CPR as a socializing strategy provides affection and esteem on the display of expected behaviour and this controlling practice forces the adolescent to act out of their need to gain approval and affection (Cury, et al., 2006; Pekrun, et al., 2009). SDT further explains that this regulation contains internal pressure and anxiety. Internal compulsion, which is the central regulatory process of Introjection, that would lead the sense to behave in an expected direction to be worthy. Researchers predicted that internal compulsion will yield the target action but the action is anticipated to be linked with various destructive affective consequences (Assor, et al., 2004). Social psychologist believes that self-esteem is greatly reliant on effective enactment of expected behaviour, even upon small accomplishments. However, on the other side unsuccessful tries might lead to fluctuations in self-worth. If the pressure is continual interjected, consequently, the sense of satisfaction following success is expected to be short-term, as the burden to meet yet another standard will soon take over. Moreover, in support of these findings Zeigler-Hill (2013) and Kernis, et al (2000) have found internal compulsion to be linked with academic disengagement, poor emotional control, non-functioning coping strategies, and anxious behaviour following failure. Furthermore, the academic domain of adolescents also had an impact on parental practices.

Academic Engagement Domain

Academic careers cannot be considered successful if students are not engaged with learning activities (Furrer, & Skinner, 2003; Patrick et. al., 2007). The motivational conceptualization model also incorporates negative engagement which referred to disaffection or disengagement (Wang et. al 2019; Skinner et al., 2009). Logically, the disengagement is opposite of the sense of engagement although some researchers measured this construct on a single platform but some other distinguished engagement from disengagement (Martin, 2007; Skinner et al., 2009). Generally, disengagement has been operationalized as the absence of engagement and effort. It also includes passiveness, frustration and easily gives up from the task. It also comprised of the emotional content of sadness, indifference, discouragement, passiveness, frustration and easily giving up from the task (Miquelon & Vallerand, 2006). Forms of disengagement can be conceived as disaffected behaviour and disaffected emotion. Here disaffected behaviour incorporates more than the absence of engagement and includes maladaptive motivational state like lack of participation, less involved and passivity. However, disengaged or disaffected emotions include boredom and frustration. The individual with this sense gets easily distracted and having shame and self-blaming regarding his failure (Connell et al., 1995). These disaffected emotions have a range of exhausted and indifferent emotions along with distressed involvement (Skinner, 2014). Numerous researches had suggested that various cognitive, intellectual and emotional factors tend to promote student' classengagement (Steven et. al., 2007; Furrer & Skinner, 2003). Despite this fact, there is extensive empirical work which primarily focused on "parents" and "teachers" as the major source of influence in students learning life (Ma, et. al, 2000). It is obvious from the existing literature that parents always play a vital role in their children education and this influential role has found to have extensive impact till the stage of adolescent (Browning, 2013).

In the preview of these connotations present study, mainly focused upon theoretical underpinnings of SDT (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Assor et al., 2004) and aimed to inquire how adolescent's personality development is influenced by the parenting dimension i.e., CPR. In general, parents consciously engaged themselves to the creation of a dynamic character in the overall personality grooming of their children. Along with parenting practices, the self-regulatory process mediates the relationship of CPR to children's' subsequent enactment of academic behaviour. Along with this second main socialization agent is the role of academic climate whose connectedness and adjustment are associated with a different kind of dimension of academic engagement. The educational researcher and motivational theorist are attracted towards this concept because it reflects the kind of interaction with activities and materials that could interfere with the actual learning. Formal education is an important domain in adolescent life. Empirical evidence revealed that adolescent phase comes with multiple challenges and throughout adolescence, numerous psychological and social changes take place. In parent - adolescents' interaction Morris and Steinberg (2013) emphasized the challenges accompanying early adolescence period. According to the statistics provided by the Ahmad (2018), under the shed of United Nation Development Program, 64% of the Pakistani population is younger than the age of 30; moreover, 29 % of youth is between 15 to 29 years. According to the WHO (2021) report, most of the mental illness start by the age of 14. Keeping in view the reported fact that psychological issues at early life could lead to continuing impairment in adult life. In Pakistan, generally, parents convey their children the idea of their very own formative year's studies, folklore, knowledge and close observations of other parents. Parents are usually ignorant about the psychological development of their child, and not concerned to learn powerful positive parenting. The current study has been designed under the influence of Assor et al (2004), keeping in view the interplay of the certain cultural dimensions of parenting and to test the model across cultural settings. The major issues which are link with the phenomena of child-rearing practices frequently comprise conceptual issues and contextual problems (Assor et al., 2014) and present research aimed to address this manifest need.

In light of the mentioned, theoretical and empirical work following hypotheses were formulated:

H.1. Conditional parental regard will positively correlate with introjection and academic disengagement.

H.2. Introjection would positively mediate the relationship between conditional parental regard and emotional disengagement.

II. METHOD

Sample and Data Collection. The present study used a cross-sectional survey research design to accomplish the objective from a purposively selected sample of 450 (Girls, $n = 238$ and, Boys: $n = 212$) adolescents with an age range of 15 to 21 years ($M = 19.55$, $SD = 1.69$) (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2019) from private schools and colleges of Sargodha District. Inclusion criteria were set for the mentioned age range and only those adolescents living with their both biological parents were part of the study. Participants living with single parents and in hostels were excluded. Before data collection, the primary researcher obtained the mandatory permissions from the authorities of schools, colleges and universities. Researcher adhered the ethical research protocol of APA and individually approached the sample. They were elucidated about research objectives, assured about data confidentiality and instructed about self-explanatory measurements. Self-report measures were administered in the classroom setting during study hours after obtaining informed consent of voluntary participation.

Instruments

Parental Conditional Regard Scale (PCR-12). This Scale developed by Assor et al., (2004).It consisted of 12 items with 5 points Likert type (agree-disagree) response format. Participants completed the scale twice, once for mothers and once for fathers. The author reported Cronbach alpha for the father subscale as 0.83 and mother subscale as 0.87.

Internal Compulsion Scale. This scale assessed the feelings of internal compulsion to execute the performance that had helped get conditional regard. The total of 10 items in the scale is based on the experience of introjection (Deci & Ryan, 1985).The scale response format of scale is 5 points Likert type (totally agree to disagree).The author reported Cronbach alpha is .87.

*Behavioural and Emotional Engagement and Disaffection Scale.*This scale was developed by Wellborn, (1991) and measured the construct of disengagement which comprised of emotional (5 items) and behavioural disengagement (5 items); it also involves the absence of engagement and apathetic withdrawal from academic activities.The participant rates their answer on four-point Likert scales ranging from 1 to 4 (not at all true to very true). Items were reverse coded. The author had reported Cronbach alpha for Emotional disaffection was 0.84.

III. DATA ANALYSIS

To measure the psychometric properties of the instruments, reliability analysis, mean and standard deviation were computed.To assess the direct and indirect effect, the analysis of mediation were tested using Process macro (IBM SPSS software). Mediation denotes to the covariance connections among three variables(Hayes, 2013). In the current study Parental conditional regard was independent variable and introjection was mediator, and academic disengagement was an outcome variable.

Table 1 Correlation Matrix of All Study Variables

Variables	1	2	3	4	α	M	$S.D$	$Skewness$
1.CPR_M	-	.95**	.34***	.20***	.81	33.07	9.60	.14
2.CPR_F		-	.34***	.18***	.81	33.18	10.24	.04
3. INT			-	.13**	.73	34.30	7.86	-.42
4.AED				-	.82	15.63	5.32	.20

Note. 1. CPR_M = conditional parental regard by mother; CPR_F = conditional parental regard by father ; INT = introjection; AED = academic emotional disengagement.

** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

Table 1 depicts the mean, standard deviation and internal consistency Index for all the study variables. Alpha coefficients for all scales have satisfactory internal consistency and alpha reliability of all the scales range between .73 -.82. Pearson correlation shows the significant positive relationship between perceived parental conditional regard (both father and mother), emotional academic disengagement, and internal compulsion among adolescents.

Table 2 Standardized Path Coefficients for Direct and Indirect Effects of Conditional Parental Regard (CPR) on Academic Emotional Disengagement (AED), (N=450).

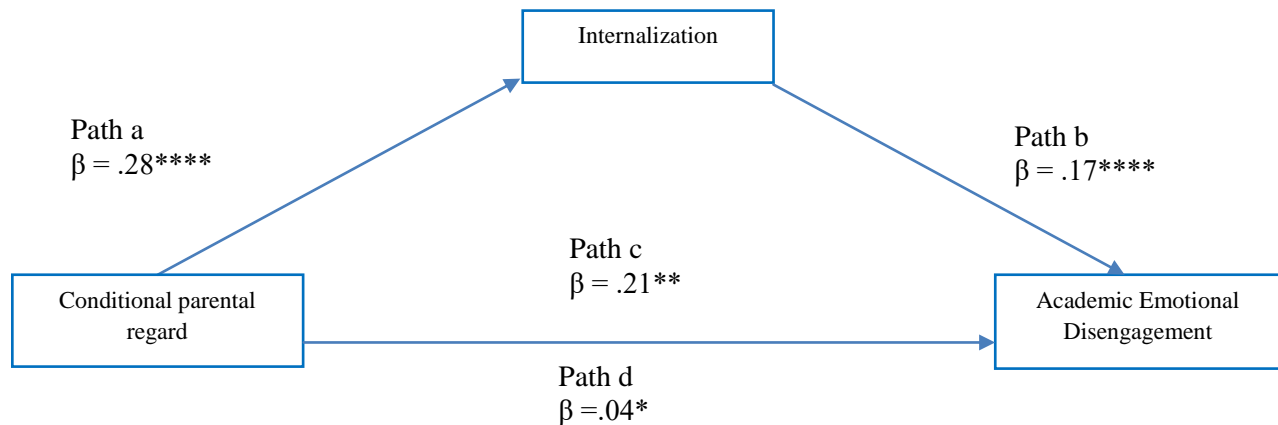
Path	Predictor Variables	Outcome variables	CPR provided by Mother			CPR provided by Father			P	
			β	95% CI		B	95% CI			
				LL	UL		LL	UL		
a	_CPR	A_INT	.28****	.19	.38	.000	.34****	.25	.43	.000
b	INT	AED	.17****	-.03	-.30	.000	.19**	-.06	-.33	.004
c	_CPR	AED	.21**	-.35	-.07	.002	.22**	-.35	-.08	.004
d	CPR through _INT	AED	.04*	.01	.10		.06**	.02	.12	

Note.1. CPR = academic parental conditional regard; AED = academic emotional disengagement; INT = internalization.

. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. **** $p < .000$

Table 2 demonstrated the meditational analysis through the process, (SPSS version 2.10, Hayes, 2013). Findings showed that all paths were significant. Furthermore, another support for the indirect effect was tested through the application of Sobel's Z, (1982), which confirmed the indirect effect of CPR on AED ($Z = 2.31, p < .02$). The statistical diagram (Figure 1; CPR; provided by mother) of mediations presented below along with the path coefficient.

Figure 1: Standardized regression coefficient for the relationship between academic parental conditional regard (CPR; provided by mother) and academic emotional disengagement AED mediated by academic internalization (A_INT).



Regression analysis for the independent effect of CPR provided by father suggested that all paths were significant. The indirect effect was further tested through the application of Sobel's Z, (1982), which confirm the indirect effect of CPR on AED ($Z = 2.617, p < .007$). The statistical diagram (figure 3) of mediation is presented below along with the path coefficient

Figure 2: Standardized regression coefficient for the relationship between academic parental conditional regard (CPR; provided by father) and academic emotional disengagement AED mediated by academic internalization (A_INT)

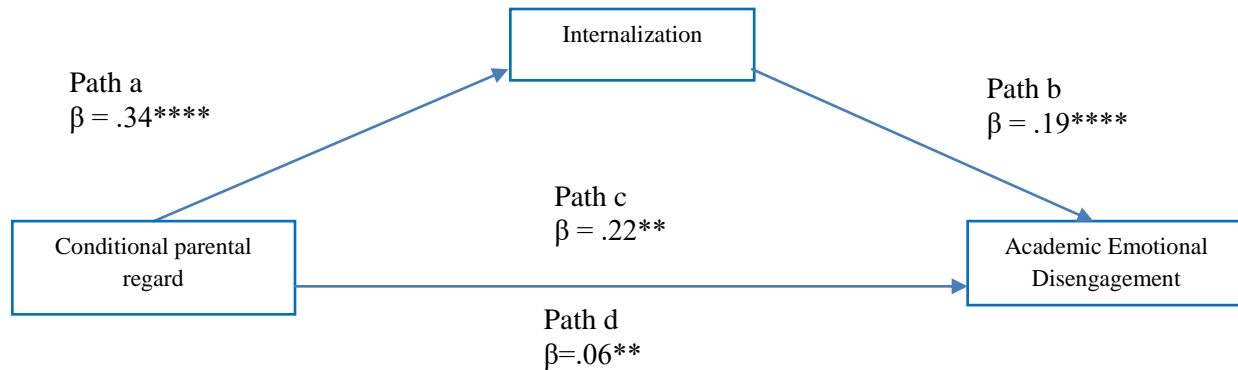


Table 3 Mean, standard deviation and t-values for Girls and Boys on study variables (N = 450)

Variables	Girls (n = 238)		Boys (n = 211)		t(446)	p	95% CI		Cohend
	M	SD	M	SD			LL	UL	
CPR_M	31.95	9.30	34.34	9.79	-2.64	.008	-4.162	-.613	.25
CPR_F	32.03	9.83	34.45	9.74	-2.61	.009	-4.239	-.599	.24
INT	33.77	8.28	34.91	7.33	1.52	.128	-2.592	.327	-
AED	16.55	5.37	14.58	5.08	3.97	.000	.99639	2.94201	.37

Note. CPR_M= conditional parental regard by mother ;CPR_F = conditional parental regard by father ; INT = introjection; AED = academic emotional disengagement.

Table 3 shows mean, standard deviation and t-values for boys and girls students on study variable including CPR_M, CPR_F, EDG. Results indicate significant mean differences on CPR_M [t (446) = 2.64, $p < .01$] CPR_F [t (446) = 2.61, $p < .01$] EDG [t (446) = 3.97 $p < .001$]. The findings show that adolescent boys significantly scored higher on CPR_M and CPR_F as compared to adolescent girls.

IV. DISCUSSION

The current study aimed to study the direct and indirect consequences of conditional parental regard among adolescents through the mediating role of introjection. Findings have been an endeavour to assimilate the gaps in existing research through related literature. The present study focused on the academic disengagement, in which adolescents perceived their parents as providing CPR. In the current study, the reliabilities of all the scales are equal or greater than .70 which is acceptable for social sciences (George & Mallery 2003). The skewness values of all the constructs were also within an acceptable range which suggested that variables of the present study approximated the normal curve in their distribution.

To discern the pattern of relationship among study variables, it was hypothesized that CPR positively correlated with academic engagement and introjection. In support of the findings, the correlation matrix suggests (Table 1) that variables were correlated in the expected direction with one another in a theoretically meaningful way. The finding showed that the CPR (maternal and paternal) as a socializing practice had a damaging impact on the academic domain. Control parenting leads the adolescents to internalize the expected or wanted behaviour, eventually; it affects their emotions and behaviour related to their studies' efforts, energy, and enthusiasm. Further, the CPR positively predicts internal compulsion which is a form of introjection. The finding shows that both maternal and paternal CPR positively linked with internal compulsion. As a socializing child-rearing practice, CPR is communally and extensively used. This practice comprises pressure building techniques which associated to meet a certain standard set by their parents. CPR leads to problematic anxiety, tension, and internal pressure, in which children act in a specific way to be worthy (Wouters et al., 2014). In reaction to CPR, the behaviour is controlled by the desire to avoid feeling guilty, ashamed and unworthy and more important children with CPR strive for a highly positive evaluation.

So when the source of pressure that out the word to the person has been taken in and it resides within-person. Consequently, individuals feel controlled by an internal force that links with social approval. Further, this study also involves an effort to analyze the mediational role of introjection between CPR and academic disengagement. The present study was alien from the latest empirical findings of Wouters, et al. (2018) who confirmed that CPR has indirect predictive strength for academic eagerness. Previous researches addressed the underlying connection of CPR through internal compulsion (introjection) with destructive consequences among adolescents. Socializing practices of love withdrawal is positively associated with a variety of negative consequences and negatively associated with positive outcomes (Kanat-Maymon, et. al., 2015). Empirically it has proven that controlling or sub-optimal child-rearing practices are the host for student adjustment issues and low academic achievement which lead to school dropout (Piko & Balazs, 2012; Zeigler-Hill, 2013).

In term of Asian or collectivistic society finding from Van der Kaap-Deeder et al., (2016) also reported a positive association between CPR and the disturbed emotional state of children. They proposed that children, whose parents exercise CPR, developed feelings of insecurity, ambiguity, embarrassment, low self-esteem and misunderstanding about their goals in life. Findings of the current study endorsed support from the previous finding that parenting like love withdrawal produces emotional conflict and maladaptive behaviour in children (García, et al., 2012, Gracia, et al., 2014). The most recent empirical findings of Cordeiro, et al., (2016) also confirmed the Self-system model of the motivational system (Skinner & Wellborn, 1997); mentioned empirical and theoretical findings favour current investigation that less supportive parenting undermines self-perception, which then leads to disaffection with learning in the classroom. Wouters, et al. (2018) indicated that CPR predicted introjection regulation which negatively affects emotional-behavioural enactment. In light of SDT theory possible explanation of this mechanism is that an internal compulsion is a form of controlled motivation that leads to an absence of motivation because of feelings of resentment toward coercive and potentially withdrawal parents. This would, in turn, lead to poor enactment of the parents' desired behaviour. Brummelman et al., (2014), suggested that motivation is a predictor of poor academic engagement behaviour in studies.

For a deeper understanding of this mechanism, Assor and Tal (2012) explains that controlled motivation (internal compulsion) is linked with rigid focused academic accomplishment which provides love and affection. Thus, internal compulsion having no attention, concentration, and concern for knowledge which is not associated with their academic grade. Kaplan and Maher (2007) referred to such motivational behaviour as "performance goal". Therefore, CPR in an academic domain promotes academic Introjection on which parental affection depends. When adolescents perceive their parents' affection as dependent on their academic achievement, as a result, they introjected or take- in the goal of academic achievement and subsequently invest a great time in attaining grades. Consistent with our model the finding Kanat-Maymon et al., (2015) found a similar pattern of lack of emotional and behavioural academic engagement that is associated with highly controlling teacher behaviour. Thus CPR appears problematic since it does not promote any kind of autonomous behaviour, so it leads to rigid, low-quality engagement.

In terms of child-rearing practices, parent employs distinct socialization goals for boys and girls. In Pakistani culture, sons are more likely to be punished and controlled, whereas parents try to be emotionally attached with their daughters Stewart et al., (2000). The present research found gender differences in perceived conditional parental regard. The value of T-test shows (Table 3) that as compared to girls, boys perceived more conditional regard from both parents (mother and father). In favour of this finding, cross-cultural research was conducted in Bangladesh and Pakistan by Stewart, et al., (2000). The research suggested that boys were more associated with psychological control parenting as compared to girls. In support of this observation another empirical finding by Barhart et al., (2013), reported that in Asian cultures, in growing age sons perceive more rejection and less affection or warmth. On the other side, daughter perceived more affection, nurturance, and emotional involvement. To interpret this traditional gender difference, it is important to note that perceived monitoring by parents was associated with better psychological functioning for girls but not for boys in both cultures (Stewart, et al., 2000).

V. CONCLUSION

Briefly, the finding showed that parents' use of CPR as a socializing practice endorses not only immediate display of the desired behaviours but also promote internal compulsion of the behavioural regulation. Moreover, controlled motivation leads to poor academic emotional-behavioural academic disengagement. The

finding of the present study suggested that CPR has indirect predictive strength for disengagement and dissatisfaction. Findings also suggested that both maternal and paternal perceived practice were in the same direction. There were no such differences observed. However, the perceiver's gender had some differences. Findings illustrate that boys perceived more CPR from both parents, as compared to girls. These findings easily relate with traditional Eastern or subcontinent practice, in which girls or daughters perceived more affection and boys perceived more controlling parenting than girls.

Limitations and Suggestions

The findings of the current study took carefully due to some research limitations. The sample size was adequate but its generalizability has become questionable because the sample was approached only from the academic institution of Sargodha city, therefore, the generalizability of results is restricted, though it gives interesting inferences about phenomena under study. Single source of data collection was another flaw of this study. The data was collected through a single method, self-report measures. This measure inherits the danger of common method variance therefore the relationship among various variables of the study might have been inflated. Researcher suggests that this issue can be by controlled by gathering the information from multiple sources, like parents and teachers in future studies. Furthermore, the use of a structured observation method can also enhance the validity of the research findings

Implications

The present study discovered that parents exert pressure on their adolescents to perform according to their expectation and this leads to academic problems. Therefore this research has wide-ranging implications, specifically for Parents, family counsellors, and clinical psychologists. The finding of the Population Fund Report (2018) suggested that 63% of the Pakistani population comprises youth under the age of 29 years. Statically, it is a significant number and needs immediate attention from all institutions like parents, social researchers, and family therapists to focus on enhancing and improving developmental outcomes through effective parenting practices. In this way, we may foster strong and meaningful relationships between parents and children especially. It will help them to develop a proper insight into the once parenting dimension. It will guide them on how CPR affects their adolescent's academic involvement, success, enjoyment, and emotional health.

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