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Academic Responsibility and Psychological Control of Parents: The Mediating Role of Cognitive Emotion Regulation

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Abstract

Abstract

Academic problems are widespread in today's societies, especially in Iran, and when the causes of these problems are investigated, the structure of academic responsibility appears more than other factors. The objective of the present study was to investigate the mediating role of cognitive regulation of emotion regarding academic responsibility and parents' psychological control. The current research was descriptive, of the correlation type. The statistical population included all secondary school students of Ahvaz in 2023-2024. Among them, 384 students were selected as a sample through the multi-stage cluster sampling method. The instruments included the Academic Responsibility Questionnaire (Glenn & Nelson, 1998), the Psychological Control Scale (Soenens et al., 2010), and the Cognitive Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (Garnefski & Kraaij, 2006). Evaluation of the proposed model was done through structural equation modeling and using SPSS and AMOS software (version 22). Goodness indices confirmed the fit of the mentioned model ($\chi 2/df = 1.99$, GFI = 0.99, AGFI = 0.97, NFI = 0.99, CFI = 0.99, IFI = 0.99, TLI = 0.97 and RMSEA = 0.05). The results indicated the direct effect of parents' psychological control on academic responsibility, as well as the direct effect of cognitive emotion regulation on academic responsibility ($P \leq 0.001$). Therefore, by teaching psychological control to parents, it is possible to improve the academic responsibility of the students in addition to improving the use of adaptive strategies of cognitive regulation of emotion, and not using non-adaptive strategies of cognitive regulation of emotion.

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Introduction

One of the issues in the field of education that plays a decisive role in the performance and morale of people is the principle of responsibility. Responsibility is a conscious and unforced choice in determining one's behaviors and how to treat others in social relationships. Academic responsibility is one of the fundamental factors in the success and progress of students in school and the social environment. It has many achievements, including increasing the level of empathy, increasing interest in school, improving learning, reducing anxiety, and improving problem-solving skills in students (Hossieni Khanzadeh et al., 2016). As the first informal institution, the family is very effective before the role of the school in the education of children, and research studies have shown that parenting styles affect the responsibility of teenagers (Asadi Rad, 2020; Xu et al., 2021) .

Since variables related to education (e.g., procrastination, academic responsibility, and academic enthusiasm) are motivational variables and have a close relationship with emotions, emotion regulation plays a major role in promoting and improving these structures (Shaybani Far et al., 2020). Emotion regulation is a process that helps people to increase, decrease, or maintain emotional, behavioral, and cognitive components. As a result of having the skill of emotional regulation, people can express their emotions appropriately; if they are involved in unpleasant emotions such as sadness, they can reduce their intensity (Fati et al., 2020).

Considering that parents and their parenting experiences are influencing factors in people's environmental perception and each of these perceptions plays an equally important role in the emotional self-regulation of people, many studies consider parents' behaviors and parenting styles to be effective in regulating children's emotions (Hong & Cui, 2020; Hossieni & Davari, 2020) .

Based on what was said, psychological controls can affect students' academic responsibility; emotional regulation can also be affected by parents' psychological control and affects students' responsibility. Thus, the main objective of this research study was to examine if the perception of parents' psychological control affects students' academic responsibility both directly and through the mediating role of cognitive regulation of emotion.

Methodology

The design of the current research study was correlational through structural equation modeling. The statistical population included all male students of the secondary level in Ahvaz in 2023-2024, of which 384 students were selected through the multi-stage cluster sampling method. To collect data, the Academic Responsibility Questionnaire (Glenn & Nelson, 1998), the Psychological Control Scale (Soenens et al., 2010), and the Cognitive Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (Garnefski & Kraaij, 2006) were used. To carry out the research, initially, based on the size of the sample, the questionnaires were duplicated and coded. In addition, to enter the schools from which the sample was to be collected, administrative arrangements were made, and the principals of these schools were also informed before distributing the questionnaires. Then, the consent of the participants to take part in the research study was obtained. Data was analyzed through Cronbach's alpha using SPSS software (version 22) and, and confirmatory factor analysis using AMOS software (version 22).

Results

Demographic findings showed that the students in the study were in the age range of 16 and 18 years old; the most frequent age included 17 years old (170 students), 16 years old (100 students), and 18 years old (114 students). These students were studying in the second level of secondary school, and they were present in the 10th grade (100 students), 11th grade (170 students), and 12th grade (114 students). Descriptive findings of the research variables including mean, standard deviation, minimum, and maximum scores of variables are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of research variables

Variable	Mean	Standard deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Academic responsibility	66.68	28.94	25	123
Development-oriented psychological control	18.03	4.87	8	33
Dependent-oriented psychological control	21.66	6.04	8	39
Adaptive strategies of cognitive emotion regulation	22.50	7.84	8	36
Non-adaptive strategies of cognitive emotion regulation	27.79	7.98	11	50

To check the normality, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used. According to the results of the normality test, the variables showed a significance level higher than 0.05. Thus, the distributions of the pretest and posttest scores obtained from the Academic Responsibility, Psychological Control, and Cognitive Regulation of Emotion questionnaires in the experimental and the control groups were normal. Table 2 shows the correlation coefficients between research variables.

Table 2. Matrix of correlation coefficients between the variables

Variable		1	2	3	4	5
1	Academic responsibility	-				
2	Development-oriented psychological control	-.35**	-			
3	Dependent-oriented psychological control	-.34**	.50**	-		
4	Adaptive strategies of cognitive emotion regulation	.32**	-.33**	-.32**	-	
5	Non-adaptive strategies of cognitive emotion regulation	.-28**	.37**	.32**	-.21**	-

P*≤ .05; **P ≤ .01

As Table 2 shows, correlations were observed between development-oriented psychological control and adaptive strategies of cognitive emotion regulation ($r = 0.33$, $p < 0.01$), development-oriented psychological control and non-adaptive strategies of cognitive emotion regulation ($r = 0.37$, $p < 0.01$), development-oriented psychological control and academic responsibility ($r = 0.35$, $p < 0.01$), dependent-oriented psychological control and adaptive strategies of cognitive emotion regulation ($r = 0.32$, $p < 0.01$), dependent-oriented psychological control and non-adaptive strategies of cognitive emotion regulation ($r = 0.32$, $p < 0.01$), dependent-oriented psychological control and academic responsibility ($r = 0.34$, $p < 0.01$), adaptive strategies of cognitive emotion regulation and academic responsibility ($r = 0.32$, $p < 0.01$), and non-adaptive strategies of cognitive emotion regulation and academic responsibility ($r = 0.28$, $p < 0.01$).

All fit indices including relative chi-square ($\chi 2/df = 1.99$), goodness-of-fit index (GFI = 0.99), comparative goodness-of-fit index (AGFI = 0.97), Bentler-Bonnet index of goodness-of-fit index (NFI = 0.99), comparative fit index (CFI = 0.99), incremental fit index (IFI = 0.99), Tucker-Lewis index (TLI = 0.97), and root mean square index of approximation error variance (RMSEA = 0.05) indicated a good fit of the proposed research model. Table 3 shows the direct effects of variables on each other in the proposed research model. As the results show, all direct paths had significant coefficients.

Table 3. Direct effects of the research variables in the proposed model

Paths	Standard estimate	Standard error	Critical ratio	P-value
development-oriented psychological control → adaptive strategies of cognitive emotion regulation	-.234	.088	-4.297	.001
development-oriented psychological control → non-adaptive strategies of cognitive emotion regulation	.280	.088	5.182	.001
dependent-oriented psychological control → adaptive strategies of cognitive emotion regulation	-.200	.071	-3.667	.001
dependent-oriented psychological control → non-adaptive strategies of cognitive emotion regulation	.180	.071	3.337	.001
development-oriented psychological control → academic responsibility	-.156	.330	-2.803	.005
dependent-oriented psychological control → academic responsibility	-.162	.259	-2.978	.003
adaptive strategies of cognitive emotion regulation → academic responsibility	.189	.181	3.837	.001
non-adaptive strategies of cognitive emotion regulation → academic responsibility	-.129	.180	-2.594	.009

As Table 4 shows, the lower limit and upper limit with a confidence interval for adaptive strategies and non-adaptive strategies of cognitive regulation of emotion as a mediating variable in the relationship between

development-oriented psychological control and academic responsibility did not include zero. Therefore, the indirect relationship between the variables was significant. In addition, the results of the bootstrap test showed that these indirect relationships were significant at the P ≤ 0.001 level.

Table 4. Bootstrap results for intermediate paths

Paths	Data	Lower limit	Upper limit	p-value
development-oriented psychological control → adaptive strategies of cognitive emotion regulation → academic responsibility	-.4538	-.6893	-.2374	.001
development-oriented psychological control → non-adaptive strategies of cognitive emotion regulation → academic responsibility	-.3805	-.6543	-.1398	.001
dependent-oriented psychological control → adaptive strategies of cognitive emotion regulation → academic responsibility	-.3566	-.5426	-.1871	.001
dependent-oriented psychological control → non-adaptive strategies of cognitive emotion regulation → academic responsibility	-.2884	-.4820	-.1121	.001

Conclusion

The results showed that development-oriented psychological control and dependent-oriented psychological control had significant effects on the cognitive regulation strategies of emotion. This finding is in line with the results of research studies (e.g., Hong, & Cui, 2020; Hossieni & Davari, 2020). Moreover, development-oriented psychological control and dependent-oriented psychological control had significant effects on academic responsibility. This finding is in line with the results of studies such as Asadi et al., (2016) and Xu et al., (2021). On the other hand, cognitive emotion regulation strategies had a significant effect on academic responsibility. This finding is in line with the research results of Shaybani Far et al.'s (2020) study. In explaining this finding, it can be stated that when performing life tasks, emotion strengthens and directs behaviors in a useful and efficient way for development (Thompson et al., 2019).

As a result, development-oriented psychological control and dependent-oriented psychological control have an indirect and significant effect on academic responsibility through cognitive emotion regulation strategies. In the explanation of this finding, it can be stated that in the development-oriented psychological control, the complete performance of activities based on the criteria of the parents is considered. As development-oriented parents put pressure on themselves to achieve excellence and blame themselves for poor performance, they have similar behaviors to control their children.

This study suffered from some limitations. First, the participants may have been affected by the test conditions as a result of filling out multiple questionnaires during the research process; their accuracy in answering the questions may have decreased. Second, the only instrument for data collection included questionnaires with a self-report section. Thus, it is not without problems and bias. Considering the effect of parents' psychological control on their children's cognitive regulation of emotion and academic responsibility, it is therefore suggested that educational workshops be held for parents focusing on parenting styles and the negative results of their control style. Thus, parents would be familiar with the destructive effects of control.

Conflict of interest

There is no conflict of interest in this article.

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