



## The relationship between parenting styles and social adjustment of parents with children with learning disabilities: the mediating role of emotional regulation

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### ABSTRACT

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**Background and Aim:** Life skills, including social adaptation, play an essential role in life, and paying attention to parenting styles can play a role in social adaptation. Accordingly, the aim of this research was to investigate the relationship between parenting styles and parents' social adjustment in children with learning disabilities. **Methods:** The current research method was applied in terms of purpose and descriptive in terms of correlation. The statistical population of the research consists of all mothers aged 30 to 55 with children with learning disabilities in primary schools in Qom, 260 of whom have referred to learning disabilities centers, of which 150 were selected as the sample size by random sampling. The research tools included Gholami and Delavari learning disorder questionnaires (2020), Baumerind's parenting methods (1973), Wiseman and Pickel's social adjustment scale (1978) and Garnefski cognitive emotion regulation (2001). To analyze the data, descriptive and inferential statistics (structural equations and path analysis) were used with SPSS<sup>24</sup> and PLs software. **Results:** The research findings showed that there is a significant relationship between parenting styles and emotional regulation with parents' social adjustment. Also, the results showed that the mediating role of emotional regulation in the relationship between parenting styles and parents' social adjustment, which is equal to /438 in the research, is a positive value and significant at the 95% confidence level. Also, the coefficient value of the path of emotional regulation on parents' social adjustment is equal to 0.654, which is a positive value. The t-statistic of this relationship is equal to 10.513, which is reported to be significant at the 95% confidence level. The data means that there is a significant relationship between the dimensions of parenting styles and parents' social adjustment with the mediation of emotional regulation. **Conclusion:** According to the value obtained from the VAF statistic (the role of the mediator variable) which was equal to 0.554, partial mediation has been confirmed.



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## Introduction

Today, learning is considered as the most basic process, as a result of which a helpless and helpless creature becomes a transformed person over time and through interaction and physical growth, whose cognitive abilities and thinking power know no boundaries. The great variety and extent of human learning time, which is as long as his life, has caused them to have problems in the normal process of learning and education, despite the many differences they have in learning (Ribily and Pairer, 2019). One of the different characteristics of people in today's society is learning disorders, which is exceptional in the field of children and includes a large percentage of children. Some students, despite having natural intelligence, are able to read, write and do mathematical calculations according to their age, and it is not their education that these people are recognized as having learning disabilities (Filippello et al., 2020). According to the definition provided in the law on the education of people with disabilities, learning disability refers to a disorder in basic psychological processes that includes understanding and using language. This disorder manifests as an inability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, and calculate. It is a set of learning problems that do not include visual, hearing, movement, mental retardation, emotional abnormalities, and adverse environmental, cultural, and economic conditions (McClellan, Gelman, and Thompson, 2011). Undoubtedly, the attention of parents and the education society of the country is more focused on meeting the academic needs of students, and this has caused them to neglect other needs of students, including their spiritual needs.

Social adjustment in adolescents as the most important sign of their mental health is one of the topics that has been the focus of many sociologists, psychologists and educators in recent decades. Because adolescence is a sensitive period and the social adjustment of adolescents undergoes changes in this period. (Krasilnikov & Smirnova, 2017) It is very intense emotionally, physically and mentally and is not yet fully developed. For this reason, the delay in emotional maturity may cause serious problems in the interpersonal relationships of teenagers and social challenges for them. In addition to this, social growth is the

most important aspect of every person's existential growth, and the criterion for measuring each person's social growth is his compatibility with others. Social adaptation, like physical, emotional and mental development, is a continuous quantity and it gradually reaches perfection and is naturally achieved during life and in dealing with experiences (Zhang et al., 2018).

Studies have been done on the subject of the research. In a research by Tuslizadaeh et al. (2022), they concluded that communication with parents contributes to the prediction of learning disorders, perfectionism contributes to the prediction of learning disorders, and learning disorders in students were correctly predicted based on perfectionism and parenting styles. In a research by Hossein Lu et al. (2022), they concluded that parenting styles have a direct effect on behavioral disorders. Hosseini and Davari (2021) concluded that parenting styles play a role in predicting emotion regulation components in high school students. Moqtadaei et al. (2019) concluded that the parenting program based on the lived experiences of mothers with children with specific learning disabilities has an effect on parenting stress and children's academic emotions. Fatehi Pikani and Salehi (2020) concluded that there is a significant difference between the scores of the control and experimental groups in negative strategies and positive regulation and self-efficacy of students with social disorders; They also stated that educational intervention increases the use of positive emotion regulation strategies and increases self-efficacy and decreases the use of negative emotion regulation strategies. in female students and parenting education has an effect on compassion for parents, emotional cognitive regulation and self-efficacy of female students with social disease. Pourabrahimi and Donya (2021) concluded in a research that parenting stress, negative emotions and maladaptive research cognitive regulation strategies were more in mothers of children with disabilities than in mothers of children without disabilities. Also, the cognitive regulation strategies of adaptive emotion in mothers of children without disabilities were more than mothers of children with disabilities; Therefore, I can predict the stress, negative emotions and incompatible strategies of cognitive emotional

regulation of these mothers and provide them with the necessary training. Periria (2019) concluded that when the family supports and encourages the child, his behavioral problems are reduced. Marwa (2018) concluded that parents with a punitive and gentle style are the best styles for predicting children's positive or negative social behaviors.

Regarding the necessity of research, it should be said that learning disorders cause various problems for people suffering from it. On the other hand, this challenge causes a waste of educational resources and opportunities. Paying attention to learning disorders can facilitate a better understanding of teaching and learning and put the learner on the right path. Therefore, the need to study this issue is serious. According to the conducted research, there is still a research gap and the need for research in this field is felt, so the main purpose of the present study was to investigate the relationship between parenting styles and social adjustment of parents in children with learning disabilities.

**Method**

The current research method was an applied study in terms of its purpose and descriptive-correlational in terms of its method. The statistical population of the research consists of all mothers aged 30 to 55 years who have children with learning disabilities in primary schools in Qom, 260 of whom have referred to learning disabilities centers, of which 150 were selected as a statistical sample by random sampling.

**Materials**

**1. Gholami and Delavari learning disorder questionnaires (2021):** The test made by the researcher Gholami and Delavari consists of nineteen factors and has two auditory and visual parts; And its content validity was confirmed by psychology professors and then it was implemented on a sample of 206 preschool students. The designers of this tool evaluated its

validity and reliability favorably. In the present study, reliability was obtained with Cronbach's alpha test of 0.91.

**2. Baumerind's (1973) parenting methods questionnaire:** this tool has 30 questions and measures parents' parenting methods in three factors: permissive, authoritarian, and assertive. In front of each statement, there are 5 columns (strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, somewhat disagree, strongly disagree). In the present study, its reliability was 0.80.

**3. Weisman and Pickel's (1978) social adjustment scale:** this instrument examines social adjustment in seven main roles or domains. These roles include: job compatibility, social and extracurricular activities, family relations, marital relations, parental role, family relations and economic status. This tool has been approved by researchers in Iran. In the present study, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.79.

**4. Garnevsy's Cognitive Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (2001):** This questionnaire evaluates a person's thoughts after facing a negative experience or traumatic events. The creators of this test reported the reliability of this test using Cronbach's alpha coefficient for adaptive emotion cognitive regulation styles 0.87 for adaptive emotion cognitive regulation styles 0.91 and for the whole scale 0.93. In the current study, the reliability was 0.90.

**Results**

According to the results of descriptive statistics, from the total of 150 statistical samples, 46.6% (70 people) are 30-40 years old; 43.4% (65 people) are 41-50 years old; 10 percent (15 people) are over 50 years old. Also, the statistics of 20 percent (30 people) associate degree; 50% (75 people) bachelors; 26 percent (40 people) have a master's degree; 4% (5 people) have doctorates and above. In Table 1, the descriptive statistics of the research variables are reported.

Table 1. Central indicators, dispersion and distribution of factors

Index	Central	Dispersion	Distribution		
	Mean	SD	Variance	Skewness	Kurtosis
Parenting style	3.1975	0.4347	0.189	0.774	1.594
Emotion Regulation	3.1075	0.53541	0.287	-0.794	4.403
Social adjustment of parents	3.195	0.4387	0.192	0.54	2.732

The results of Table 1 show that the mean of parenting style is equal to 3.19, the mean scores

of emotional regulation are 3.10 and social adjustment is 3.19, which are in average

condition. The coefficient of determination shows the amount of explanation of the variance of the dependent variable by the independent variables. In this study, the adjusted determination coefficient of parents' social

adjustment is 0.752, which indicates that about 75% of changes in parents' social adjustment are influenced by research variables, and the rest are factors that are not considered in the model.

Table 2. Effect size

	Learning disability	Social adjustment
Parenting style	0.174	0.29
Emotion Regulation	0.031	0.035
Social adjustment of parents		0.685

Another criterion is to examine the structural model of the effect size. Cohen (1988) values of 0.02; 0.15 and more than 0.35 have been evaluated as weak, medium and strong values, respectively. The results of examining the effect size values in Table 2 showed that this value was reported for effects in the weak to strong range.

The predictive power of the model or common redundancy is another criterion for examining the structural model. The most famous and well-

known criterion to measure this ability is the Q2 index, based on this criterion, the model should predict the variable indices of the reflective endogenous flow. The values obtained from this test are positive, which indicates the appropriate quality of the structural model. The results showed that the predictive power of the model is 0.203 for parenting style, 0.549 for emotion regulation, and 0.524 for social adjustment of parents. These values are in the medium to strong level.

Table 3. Overall fit model results

Variable	R	R	Q <sup>2</sup>	Q	GOF
Parenting style		0.723	0.203	0.560	0.406
Emotion Regulation			0.549		
Social adjustment of parents	0.752		0.524		
Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR)					0.710

According to the above table, the value obtained for GOF is 0.405, which indicates that the overall fit of the model is average, and therefore the overall fit of the model is confirmed. The optimal value for this index is 0.08. The results obtained from this index showed that its value was reported to be equal to 0.071, which is a desirable value, and therefore the appropriate fit of the overall model is confirmed. Considering that the obtained Z value is higher than 1.96, therefore, the mediating role of emotional regulation in the relationship between parenting styles and parents' social adjustment is

significant at the 95% confidence level. Therefore, the null hypothesis of the research is rejected and the opposite hypothesis is confirmed in the sense that there is a significant relationship between the dimensions of parenting styles and social adaptation of parents with the mediation of emotional regulation. According to the value obtained from the VAF statistic (the role of the mediating variable) which is equal to 0.554, it can be said that partial mediation has taken place. A summary of the hypotheses is presented in the table below.

Table 4. Summary of hypotheses results

Hypotheses	Beta	t	P	VAF	Sobel	Result
Parenting styles (social compatibility of parents)	0.438	3.458	0.011			Approved
emotional regulation (social adjustment of parents)	0.654	10.513	0.007			Approved
Parenting styles (emotional regulation of social adaptation of parents)				0.554	2.749	Approved
Direct impact	0.159	2.706	0.007			
Indirect effect	0.198	3.958	0.000			
Total effect	0.357	4.826	0.000			

The results of the above table show that the value of the path coefficient between parenting styles and parents' social adjustment is equal to 0.438, which is a positive value. The t statistic of this relationship is equal to 3.452. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between parenting styles and parents' social adjustment. The result of another hypothesis is that the value of the path coefficient of emotional regulation and social adjustment of parents is equal to 0.654, which is a positive value. The t-statistic of this relationship is equal to 10/513. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between emotional regulation and social adjustment of parents. Another is that the mediating role of emotional regulation has an effect on the relationship between parenting styles and social adjustment of parents of students.

**Conclusion**

The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between parenting styles and parents' social adjustment in children with learning disabilities. The result of the first hypothesis showed that there is a significant relationship between parenting styles and parents' social adjustment. This finding is consistent with the research results of Tuslizadeh et al. (2022), Hossein Lo et al. (2022) and Hosseini and Davari (2021). In explaining this finding, it can be said that parents, as the first factors of children's socialization, play an important role in children's psychological and social development and satisfying their psychological needs, and their parenting style facilitates students' academic motivation. Experiencing safe and stable relationships with parents and upbringing in a calm and orderly atmosphere is essential for

a child's psychological well-being and socialization. They apply low and high temperature control. Each parenting method has different consequences. Assertive and reassuring parenting methods in childhood make children lively, cheerful, self-esteem and high self-control (Phillips et al., 2017). This method makes them show courage and high success during adolescence. Authoritarian parenting style in childhood causes the child to grow up anxious, unhappy and maladjusted. The careless parenting style also makes the impulsive, disobedient, rebellious and expected and dependent child perform poorly in school. Permissive parenting style is characterized by lack of parental control and response to the child's wishes. Permissive parents try to create a warm, calm and pleasant environment for their children, but they do not have self-control and supervision over their children's actions. Parents who use permissive parenting style use unstable or unstructured rules (Ebrahimi et al., 2017). Another finding showed that there is a significant relationship between emotional regulation and social adjustment of parents. This finding is consistent with the research results of Fatehi Pikani and Salehi (2020) and Pourabrahimi and Dunya (2021). In explaining this finding, it can be said that they seek to experience stressful situations. The use of negative emotion regulation strategies causes difficulty in restraining impulses of physical damage and limited access to appropriate emotional regulation strategies, and as a result of limited access, the effective cognitive emotional regulation of a person to end a negative emotional state damages his behaviors. (Ford et al., 2018); Therefore, correct awareness of feelings, correct assessment regarding the

origin of emotional discomforts, can help reduce physical injuries. Research shows that emotional regulation skills training improves the acceptance and tolerance of negative emotions and significantly, emotional regulation skills training is associated with an increase in positive emotions. A possible explanation is that the ability to effectively deal with negative emotions, which must be acknowledged when necessary, can prevent these emotions from exerting a destructive influence on positive emotions. Additionally, emotion regulation training includes exercises to help increase awareness/appreciation of positive emotions and consciously engage in pleasurable activities that facilitate positive emotions and improve mental health (Dryman et al., 2018).

Another finding showed that the mediating role of emotional regulation in the relationship between parenting styles and parents' social adjustment is significant at the 95% confidence level. This means that there is a significant relationship between the dimensions of parenting styles and social adjustment of parents with the mediation of emotional regulation. In this regard, it can be said that by strengthening positive emotional aspects, the necessary ground for mental health is provided, because people with positive emotional regulation spend all their efforts on the desired goals and identify and choose the appropriate ways to reach the goal. In other words, these people consider themselves responsible for life events and therefore feel valuable. By using appropriate coping methods, having appropriate beliefs and adhering to valuable issues, these people are in control of their destiny to a large extent and perceive life changes more positively, so the characteristic of positive emotional aspects can be a factor. Controlling the negative effects of mental stress and observing people's mental health is important, therefore, a significant number of families in Iranian society suffer from the negative effects of having a disabled child as well as the heavy burden of care and mental health. Social and financial pressures caused by having such a child, these factors can disturb the stability of the family and cause disruption in the family organization. Mothers with children with a disorder face many challenges to their children's problems and most of the time they cannot use appropriate solutions; While teaching the parenting program

increases children's psychological health, behavioral, intelligence, language, emotional and social efficiency; Therefore, it plays an effective role in improving emotion regulation and mother-child interaction with the disorder.

Like any other research, the limitation in the generalizability of the results to different societies can be stated as one of the main limitations of the current research. Also, using a quantitative method instead of a combined method is another limitation of this research. According to the results, it is suggested that parents should have the necessary knowledge and understanding about parenting styles and the factors influencing them, and if they reflect this knowledge in their behavior with their children, they will definitely be more successful in raising their children. The results of this research highlight the importance of the parent-adolescent relationship for counselors, schools and parents. Therefore, counselors and schools should investigate the type of parental authority and emotional intelligence of adolescents in order to solve the academic problems of adolescents and also make efforts to educate the family and increase relational skills. Also, parents can guarantee their children's academic future by using correct educational methods based on increasing their children's emotional intelligence.

#### Conflict of Interest

According to the authors, this article has no financial sponsor or conflict of interest.

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