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Perceived Parenting Styles, Self-Regulation and Multidimensional Well-Being among Adolescents of Armed Forces and Civilian Families (Mixed Method Study)

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Abstract

Purpose: Adolescence is a crucial developmental stage where parent-child relationships are often reevaluated. This study examined the effect of perceived parenting styles and self-regulation on the multidimensional well-being of adolescents from armed forces and civilian families.

Methodology: A mixed-method research design was employed. Study I (quantitative) included 300 adolescents (150 from each family type) in Lahore, selected through purposive sampling. Assessment measures used were the Adolescents Self-Regulation Inventory (ASRI) and the Multidimensional Well-Being Scale (PERMA Profiler).

Findings: Findings revealed that short-term self-regulation (SSR) had a negative significant relationship with multidimensional well-being (MWB), while long-term self-regulation (LSR) showed a positive significant relationship with MWB. SSR negatively predicted MWB, while LSR positively predicted MWB. Adolescents from armed forces families had higher SSR and MWB, whereas those from civilian families had higher LSR and MWB. Study II (qualitative) employed thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews from six adolescents from both family types to explore the role of perceived parenting styles and their impact on multidimensional well-being.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Policy and Practice: This study advances theory by highlighting the distinct roles of short- and long-term self-regulation in adolescent well-being. It informs policy by emphasizing the need for context-specific parenting support programs. Practically, it guides mental health professionals and educators in developing interventions that promote balanced parenting and enhance adolescent well-being across diverse family backgrounds.

Keywords: *Perceived Parenting Style, Self-Regulation, Multidimensional Well-Being, Adolescents, Armed Forces Families, Civilian Families*

1. Introduction

Adolescence is a critical developmental stage marked by rapid physical, cognitive, and emotional changes (Uktamovna, 2025). Typically spanning ages 10 to 19, it involves increased awareness of the environment, emotional regulation, and understanding of parental expectations (Sawyer et al., 2018; Clark-Kazak, 2009). During this period, effective parenting plays a vital role in shaping behaviors and skills needed to navigate societal challenges. Parenting styles—authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful—differently influence adolescent development and well-being (Maccoby & Martin, 1983; Baumrind, 1991). Authoritative parenting, characterized by responsiveness and demandingness, is linked to positive outcomes such as improved self-esteem and emotional regulation (Akhtar et al., 2020; Hoover et al., 2009). In contrast, authoritarian parenting, marked by high control and low responsiveness, is associated with negative outcomes like increased depression and behavioral problems (Bahrami et al., 2018). Armed forces families face unique challenges such as frequent relocations and parental deployments, which shape parenting styles and adolescent development (Hall, 2008; Lapp et al., 2010). The structured lifestyle and frequent moves expose children to various environments, potentially leading to social isolation and dependence on military communities (Hall, 2008). Despite this, research on military parenting's impact on adolescent development remains limited.

Self-regulation—the ability to manage behavior and emotions in response to family and societal demands—is crucial during adolescence (Asiegbu, 2024). It encompasses cognitive control, problem-solving, and task management and is influenced by biopsychosocial factors (Murray et al., 2019). Effective self-regulation supports healthy relationships, academic success, and overall well-being (Hampson et al., 2016), whereas poor self-regulation can result in stress, depression, and maladaptive behaviors (Moffitt et al., 2011; Eisenberg, 2000). Adolescence involves brain changes affecting emotion and reward systems, making it essential for developing self-control (Murray & Rosanbalm, 2017). Parenting practices like overprotectiveness can significantly affect adolescents' self-regulation abilities (Brodie & Gee, 2001).

Multidimensional well-being reflects overall life quality, integrating positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment as outlined by the PERMA model (Seligman, 2011). Positive emotion relates to joy and satisfaction; engagement involves deep involvement in activities; relationships emphasize supportive social connections; meaning refers to a sense of purpose; and accomplishment relates to personal goal achievement. This model integrates emotional, psychological, and social factors to provide a comprehensive view of life satisfaction and mental health (Huppert & So, 2013). It is particularly useful for understanding how parenting styles and self-regulation influence adolescent development.

This study explores the effects of perceived parenting styles and self-regulation on adolescents' multidimensional well-being in armed forces and civilian families. Speck and Riggs (2016) found that military mothers tend to use more authoritarian parenting styles than civilian mothers,

affecting children's experiences. Abidin (2022) emphasized that authoritative parenting—marked by warmth, structure, and autonomy support—significantly improves adolescents' emotional well-being by fulfilling basic psychological needs. Doris et al. (2022) reported that permissive and authoritative parenting styles positively correlate with better emotional regulation and cognitive appraisal in young adults, while authoritarian parenting shows no significant relation with cognitive reappraisal. Meredith et al. (2021) showed that parent-adolescent relationship quality plays a vital role in adolescent adjustment within military families, even though military stressors may have limited direct impact.

Catherine et al. (2024) identified three family profiles in military contexts, with thriving families reporting high well-being and low depressive symptoms. Sajjad et al. (2019) found that authoritative parenting improves self-control and self-regulation among delinquent adolescents, while authoritarian parenting reduces these capacities. Similarly, Zeinali and Ali (2014) reported positive effects of authoritative parenting on adolescent self-regulation, contrasting with negative effects from authoritarian and neglectful styles. Jain (2018) linked authoritative parenting with enhanced psychological well-being and nonviolent behavior in adolescents. Alyson et al. (2023) observed higher distress and lower well-being among youth from military families compared to non-military peers. Ren et al. (2023) stressed that warm parenting boosts adolescent well-being through increased self-kindness, while harsh parenting has weaker effects.

Indigenous research contributes culturally specific insights. Khawar et al. (2023) and Zara and Saleem (2021) showed that adaptive cognitive emotion regulation and interpersonal problems mediate parenting's effects on adolescent well-being. Kalhor (2024) found mixed influences of authoritative and authoritarian parenting on adolescent mental health in Nawabshah, Pakistan. Adnan et al. (2022) reported a positive link between authoritative parenting and resilience in adolescents from Islamabad.

This study aims to fill gaps in the literature by combining quantitative and qualitative approaches to understand how parenting styles and self-regulation affect adolescent well-being across different family contexts. Adolescence is a sensitive developmental phase shaped by parenting styles, with armed forces families often promoting resilience-building strategies that foster adolescents' confidence and adaptability. Civilian families vary widely based on culture, socioeconomic status, and individual factors. This research offers a culturally relevant understanding of how parenting practices influence self-regulation and well-being, emphasizing the need for culturally sensitive approaches in parenting and adolescent development.

Hypotheses

H1 Short-term self-regulation will be negatively associated with multidimensional well-being among adolescents from both armed forces and civilian families.

H2 Long term self-regulation will be positively associated with multidimensional wellbeing among adolescents from both armed forces and civilian families.

H3 There will likely to be self-regulation will significantly predict multidimensional wellbeing among adolescents of both armed forces and civilian families.

H4 There will be significant differences among armed forces and civilian families with reference to self-regulation and multidimensional well-being.

Method

In the current study, a mixed-methods research design was employed, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches. This design, as outlined by Creswell and Clark (2011), provides a comprehensive framework for collecting and analyzing data from multiple sources. For the quantitative research (Study I), purposive sampling was utilized to select a sample of 300 adolescents, equally divided between armed forces ($n = 150$) and civilian families ($n = 150$). This sampling strategy, recommended by Kelly (2010) and Palinkas et al. (2015), ensures the selection of participants who are most likely to provide relevant and insightful data. The sample included both males and females aged 13 to 19 years from intact families, excluding participants from cities other than Lahore and adults. The quantitative study employed several assessment tools. The Demographic Form collected information on age, gender, birth order, number of siblings, education, branch of service, and socioeconomic status. The Adolescent Self-Regulation Inventory (ASRI), developed by Moilanen (2007), is a 36-item tool that assesses adolescents' ability to regulate emotions, thoughts, attention, and behavior. It evaluates short-term self-regulation (impulse, emotional, and attention control for immediate goals) and long-term self-regulation (for achieving future objectives). Responses are recorded on a 5-point Likert scale. Reported internal consistency is $\alpha = 0.80$ for long-term and $\alpha = 0.75$ for short-term self-regulation. The Multidimensional Well-Being Scale, known as the PERMA-Profilier and based on Seligman's PERMA model, measures five dimensions of well-being: Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment. It includes 23 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale. Internal consistency for the five PERMA facets ranges from $\alpha = .63$ to $\alpha = .85$, with an overall scale reliability of $\alpha = .94$ (Butler & Kern, 2015). For qualitative research (Study II), sample was comprised for 6 adolescents (3 (2 females, 1 male) from civilian families and 3 (2 female and 1 male) from armed forces families) adolescents through semi structured in depth interviews. This method of qualitative research ensuring a fine balance consistency in the interviewing framework and flexibility in eliciting individual experiences among participants. Such flexibility within semi-structured interviewing allows for the emergence of comprehensive insight into the thoughts, feelings and views of participants which otherwise may not emerge through a strictly structured interview. It was argued that it is one of the most effective ways of eliciting in depth information (Kallio et al., 2016).

Table 1

Demographics Characteristics of the Study Variable (N=300)

Characteristics	<i>f %</i>		<i>M(SD)</i>
Age			16.06(1.61)
	Armed Forces Families	Civilian Families	
Gender			
Male	88 (29.3%)	64 (21.3%)	
Female	62 (20.7%)	86 (28.7%)	
Birth Order			
Eldest	71(23.7%)	54 (18.0%)	
Middle	45 (15.0%)	50 (16.7%)	
Youngest	34 (11.3%)	46 (15.3%)	
No of siblings			
2	46 (15.3%)	41 (13.7%)	
3	87 (29.0%)	69 (23.0%)	
4	17 (5.7%)	34 (11.3%)	
5	0 (0.0%)	06 (2.0%)	
Education			
Under Matric	45 (15.0%)	43 (14.3%)	
Matric	35 (11.7%)	52 (17.3%)	
Intermediate	70 (23.3%)	55 (18.3%)	
Socioeconomic Status			
Upper class	56 (18.7%)	15 (5.0%)	
Middle class	94 (31.3%)	135 (45.0%)	

Note. *f*= Frequency, *M*= Mean, *SD*= Standard Deviation

For the qualitative research (Study II), a sample of 6 adolescents (3 from civilian families and 3 from armed forces families) was interviewed using semi-structured protocols. This method, highlighted by Kallio et al. (2016), provides a balance between structured inquiry and flexibility, allowing for in-depth exploration of participants' experiences. The interviews were guided by six research protocol and three main research questions focusing on the contributions of mothers' and fathers' affection and involvement to adolescents' well-being. The data were recorded, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed thematically.

Research Questions

- How do adolescents perceive and describe the ways in which their mother's affection and involvement contribute to their multidimensional wellbeing?
- How do adolescents perceive and describe the ways in which their father's affection and involvement contribute to their multidimensional wellbeing?

Procedure: In Study I, after obtaining necessary permissions and following ethical guidelines (All the gathered data was kept confidential and the rights were reserved. Proper consent was taken from each participant), data collection involved administering questionnaires to adolescents, taking approximately 20-25 minutes per participant. The data were subsequently analyzed using SPSS-24. For Study II, the protocol questions were translated into Urdu to ensure clarity, and informed consent was obtained from participants before conducting and recording interviews. The recorded data were transcribed, coded inductively, and analyzed to identify main themes according to thematic analysis.

Results of Study I

Inferential statistics computed the different statistical analysis for testing study hypotheses in which collected data was analyzed by using SPSS version 24. Suitable statistical analyses were Pearson product moment correlation, independent sample t-test and linear regression analysis with the aim of testing hypotheses.

Table 2

Psychometric Properties for Parenting style, Self-Regulation and Multidimensional Wellbeing (N=300)

Scales	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Range	Cronbach α
Self-Regulation				
Short term self-regulation (SSR)	41.53	7.68	24-56	.73
Long-term self-regulation (LSR)	36.00	9.39	17-51	.88
Multidimensional Wellbeing				
Positive Emotion (PE)	10.09	1.78	3-15	.61
Engagement (EN)	10.48	1.83	3-15	.62
Relationships (REL)	9.97	1.49	3-15	.54
Meaning (MNG)	10.28	1.66	3-15	.72
Accomplishment (ACC)	10.84	1.95	3-15	.62
Total multidimensional wellbeing	54.44	7.79	36-67	.89

Note. M= means, SD= standard deviation. SSR= Short self-regulation, LSR= Long term self-regulation, PE=Positive emotions, E=Engagement, R=Relationship, M=Meaning, A=Accomplishment.

Analysis from Table 2 indicated the cronbach's α reliability for long-term self-regulation ($\alpha = .88$) and overall multidimensional well-being ($\alpha = .89$) indicated high internal consistency, while short-term self-regulation ($\alpha = .73$) and meaning ($\alpha = .72$) showed satisfactory internal consistency. However, the reliability for engagement ($\alpha = .62$), accomplishment ($\alpha = .62$), and positive emotions ($\alpha = .61$) was relatively low, with relationships ($\alpha = .54$) indicating very low internal consistency.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics and Correlation of Study Variables (N=300)

Variables	N	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. SSR	300	41.53	7.68	-	-.48**	-.34**	-.42**	-.43**	-.39**	-.47**
2. LSR	300	36.00	9.39		-	.72**	.80**	.66**	.68**	.72**
3. PE	300	10.09	1.78			-	.65**	.49**	.67**	.57**
4. EN	300	10.48	1.83				-	.65**	.68**	.71**
5. REL	300	9.97	1.49					-	.57**	.59**
6. MNG	300	10.84	1.66						-	.68**
7. ACC	300	10.84	1.95							-

Note. n= sample size, M= means, SD= standard deviation. SSR= Short self-regulation, LSR= Long term self-regulation, PE=Positive emotions, E=Engagement, R=Relationship, M=Meaning, A=Accomplishment. **p< .01.

The Pearson product-moment correlation analysis was performed to test the hypotheses regarding self-regulation and multidimensional well-being. The results (Table 3) showed that short-term self-regulation (SSR) had a significant negative correlation with long-term self-regulation (LSR), positive emotions (PE), engagement (EN), relationships (REL), meaning (MNG), and accomplishment (ACC) of multidimensional well-being ($p < .01$). Specifically, an increase in short-term self-regulation was associated with a decrease in long-term self-regulation and multidimensional well-being variables. Conversely, long-term self-regulation exhibited a significant positive relationship with positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment of multidimensional well-being ($p < .01$), indicating that higher long-term self-regulation predicted higher multidimensional well-being.

Table 4

Mean Comparison for Self-Regulation and Multidimensional Wellbeing between Armed Forces Families and Civilians Families (N=300)

Variables	Armed Forces		Civilians		t(298)	p	Cohen's d
	M	SD	M	SD			
SSR	45.78	4.84	37.28	7.66	11.49	.001	1.33
LSR	27.33	3.66	44.68	3.48	-42.07	.001	4.86
PE	8.75	1.21	11.43	1.14	-19.72	.001	2.28
EN	8.95	1.13	12.01	.835	-26.65	.001	3.08
REL	8.87	1.12	11.07	.895	-18.84	.001	2.17
MNG	9.01	1.24	11.55	.872	-20.45	.001	2.37
ACC	9.31	1.41	12.37	.972	-21.89	.001	2.53
MWB	47.18	3.21	61.71	2.35	-44.75	.001	5.17

Note. M= Mean, SD= Standard deviation, p= level of significance, SSR= Short self-regulation, LSR= Long term self-regulation, P= Positive emotions, E=Engagement, R=Relationship, M=Meaning, A=Accomplishment, MWB=Multidimensional wellbeing

*** $p < .001$.

Independent sample t-test was performed to examine the mean differences in self-regulation and multidimensional well-being between adolescents from armed forces and civilian families (Table 4). The results revealed significant differences in short-term self-regulation, with armed forces families scoring higher ($M = 45.78$, $SD = 4.84$) compared to civilian families ($M = 37.28$, $SD = 7.66$; $t(298) = 11.49$, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 1.33$). In contrast, civilian families exhibited higher scores on long-term self-regulation ($M = 44.68$, $SD = 3.48$) compared to armed forces families ($M = 27.33$, $SD = 3.66$; $t(298) = -42.07$, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 4.86$). Significant differences were also found in positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, accomplishment, and total multidimensional well-being, with civilian families' shows significantly higher scores in long term-self-regulation and PERM ($p < .001$). The effect sizes (Cohen's d) for all variables indicated large effects, confirming that civilian families reported better overall well-being compared to families from the armed forces.

Table 5

Regression Coefficient of Self-Regulation for Multidimensional Wellbeing (N=300)

Predictor	Positive emotions			Engagement			Relationship			Meaning			Accomplishment		
	B	B	SE	B	B	SE	B	β	SE	B	β	SE	B	B	SE
Step 1															
Constant	13.3		.534	14.6		.52	13.4		0.43	13.8		0.49	15.7		0.5
	4**			3**		8	3**			4**			8***		5
	*			*			*			*					
Short term self-regulation	-	-	.013	-	-	.01	-	-	0.01	-	-	0.	-0.12***	-	0.0
	.80*	.3		.100	.42	2	0.08	0.4		0.09	0.	01		.47	1
	**	4		***			***	3		***	34				
R ²	.12			.18			.18			.16			.22		
Step 2															
Constant	5.17		.656	5.53		.57	7.82		0.59	7.01		0.64	7.79		0.7
	***			***		8	***			***			***		1
Short term self-regulation	7.39	.0	.011	-	-	.00	-	-	0.01	-	-	0.01	-	-	0.0
		0		.021	.05	9	0.02	0.1		0.02	0.	09	0.04	.17	1
							9**	5					***		
Long term self-regulation	.137	.7	.009	1.51	.78	.00	0.09	0.5	0.01	0.11	0.	0.01	0.13	.64	0.0
	***	2		***		8	3**	9		**	64		***		1
							*								
R ²	.52			.64			.45			.48			.53		

Note. B=Unstandardized Coefficient, β =Standardized Coefficient, SE=Standard error, R²= R square, **p< .01, ***p< .001

Regression analysis was used to explore the predictive effect of self-regulation on multidimensional well-being (Table 5). The findings revealed that short-term self-regulation significantly negatively predicted positive emotions ($\beta = -.34$, $p < .001$), engagement ($\beta = -.42$, $p < .001$), relationships ($\beta = -.43$, $p < .001$), meaning ($\beta = -.34$, $p < .001$), and accomplishment ($\beta = -.47$, $p < .001$). However, long-term self-regulation significantly positively predicted positive emotions ($\beta = .72$, $p < .001$), engagement ($\beta = .78$, $p < .001$), relationships ($\beta = .59$, $p < .001$),

meaning ($\beta = .64, p < .001$), and accomplishment ($\beta = .64, p < .001$), accounting for substantial variance in the multidimensional well-being variables (R^2 values ranging from .45 to .64).

Results of Study II

This qualitative study explored and compared indigenous perceived parenting styles among adolescents from armed forces and civilian families. It aimed to understand how these environments influence parenting approaches and their impact on adolescent development, behaviors and multidimensional well-being.

Table 1 Thematic Analysis of Indigenous Parenting Practices, i.e Mothers of Civilians Families

Theme	Sub Theme	Verbatim
Attachment style	Secured, Dependence Protective	“My mother is very important part of my life, without her my life feels incomplete.”
	Possessiveness	“I don’t feel any hesitation about anything and I feel much protected.”
	Comfortable sharing	My mother involvement in my life is great, everyone in my circle says I am a mama’s boy, and I don’t think there’s anything in my life that she doesn’t know about or that I want to hide from her.”
	Open communication	“I have an excellent relationship with mother and I can easily talk to her about anything.” “My mom is like a friend to me I never feel scared to tell her anything. I can easily talk to her about anything.”
	Strong emotional bond	“I have a very strong attachment with my mother. Our relationship is such that we have a very friendly bond.”
	Treating with equality	
	Reassurance and comfort	“Although my siblings and I also have good relationships with each other, my mother maintain a good relationship with all of us. She listens to everyone and treats each of us well.”

			<p>“She guides me, takes care of me and listens to everything I have to say, which helps me relax.”</p>
<p>Unconditional support and Acceptance</p>	<p>Non-critical Attitude</p>		<p>“She never criticizes me about anything.”</p>
	<p>Emotional reassurance</p>		<p>“When I had tests and was very stressed and crying because all my subjects were new and I wasn’t understand them, my mother support me a lot.</p> <p>She reassured me, saying that it’s normal to face challenges in life and encouraged me to try my best, assuring me that I would succeed.”</p>
	<p>Motivation to overcome difficulties</p>		
	<p>Attentive and Intuitive Care</p>		<p>“She just understands everything on her own.”</p>
	<p>Empathy</p>		<p>“She can tell just tell by looking at me whether I’m okay or not.”</p>
	<p>Freedom</p>		
	<p>Trust despite worries</p>		<p>“She understands my mistake and helps me by explaining how to handle things in life and how to proceed.”</p>
	<p>Non-Judgmental</p>		<p>“She never stops me, from anything.”</p> <p>Sometimes, she worries about the outside environment not being safe, but even, she trust me and let me go.”</p> <p>Sometimes I worry that if I tell my mother something, I might get scolded. However, my mother understands me and reassures me that it’s okay.”</p>
<p>Empowerment independence development</p>	<p>and</p>	<p>Encouraging Autonomy</p> <p>Personal Growth</p> <p>Self-Reliance</p>	<p>“My mother always tells me whether things are right or not, but she also says that as I am growing up, I need to handle and understand things in life on my own.”</p>

<p>Guidance in Decision-Making Moral and ethical Guidance</p>	<p>“Whenever I feel confused about something, she encourages me to try to solve it on my own.” "She handles many things in my life and guides me on how to manage everything together, how to make decisions, and what things are good for me." “She is always positively involved in every matter, teaching me to distinguish between good and bad.”</p>
<p>Acknowledgment Role</p>	<p>Appreciation of Care and Concern Encouragement and Freedom</p> <p>"I really appreciate all of this because she cares for me so much and loves me deeply." “Along with my studies, I really enjoy playing cricket, and she always allows me to go play... She fully supports me and encourages me to focus on sports activities along with my studies." "She has never discouraged me; she has always supported me, telling me to do whatever I want."</p>
<p>Feeling of Being Valued Respect for Personal Space Multifaceted Involvement</p>	<p>"It feels wonderful to know how much she thinks about me." "My mother also takes great care of my privacy. She lets me know what things are acceptable and what things are not suitable for me." "As I mentioned, she handles many things in my life and guides me."</p>
<p>Holistic Care for Well-being</p>	<p>Health and Academic Balance Physical Care and Comfort</p> <p>She is always concerned that I need to take care of my health alongside my studies because health is very important in life." "If I have a headache, she massages my head with oil to relieve the pain."</p>

Encouragement of Honesty	"She always advises me to be truthful and stay positive."
Guidance on Social Interactions	"She advises me on how to interact with people and how to never hold myself back at any point."

Table 2 Thematic Analysis of Indigenous Parenting Practices, i.e Fathers of Civilians Families

Theme	Sub Theme	Verbatim
Parental Support	Reassurance and Comfort	"Whenever I am afraid of something, my father supports me, reassures me, and tells me that I am not alone."
	Guidance and Advice	"My father always advises me to take good care of myself and keep all my things in order."
	Decision-Making Support	"Whenever I need to go out, do something, or try something new, such as seeking study-related tips, I go to my father to get his permission."
	Encouragement and Confidence	"He helps me understand how to manage various aspects of life and gives me a lot of advice."
Parental Care and Attention	Emotional Care	"Whenever I don't feel like eating something, my father orders something else that I like."
	Supportive Behavior	"Sometimes, when I go out with my father, we have a great time together."
	Health Advice	"If I use my phone too much, my father understands and discusses it with my mother, reassuring me and providing support, which makes me feel good."
	Patience	"He also advises me on maintaining my health, suggesting that I should eat healthy food and avoid ordering takeout."
	Leniency	"As compared with my siblings, my father never scolded me as much, perhaps because I am his daughter."

Encouragement and autonomy	Support for Personal Choices	"My father always supports my choices, which I really appreciate."
	Freedom	"He always prefers my choices."
	Respect for Space	"He also respects my space and encourages me to make my own decisions, explaining how to approach things and handle them."
Involvement of parents	Regular Checks	"My dad also regularly checks my study records with my teachers."
	Daily Discussions	"He talks to me daily about my studies, asking about my progress at school and the academy."
	Shared Activities	"We make the most of the weekends by planning activities together, such as engaging in playful activities and enjoying ourselves."
Health and wellbeing	Health Advice	"He also advises me on maintaining my health, suggesting that I should eat healthy food and avoid ordering takeout."
	Future orientation	"My dad believes that if I study well, I will have a bright future."
	Appreciation of Support	"My dad believes that if I study well, I will have a bright future."

Table 3 Thematic Analysis of Indigenous Parenting Practices, i.e Mothers of Armed Forces Families

Theme	Sub Theme	Verbatim
Structure guidance and Discipline	Career Aspirations	"My mom wants me to join the army like my dad, which is why she is very conscious about my studies."
	Household Rules	"My mom has set many rules and regulations at home, and everything must be done on time."
	Encouraging Discipline	"She believes that having discipline in life is very important."

	Educational Standards	"She can be a bit strict about my studies, insisting that they meet a certain standard."
Emotional connection and Involvement	Closeness and Trust	"I share even the smallest details with my mom, so she knows all my secrets—there's nothing about me that she doesn't know."
	Guidance and Advice	"She takes responsibility for guiding us, helping us differentiate between right and wrong, and advising us on how to approach things."
	Support in Activities	"She participates in all my activities, whether it's going somewhere or shopping."
	Faith in Abilities	"She has faith in my abilities and believes that becoming self-reliant will be better for my future."
	Friendship with Mother	"I have a very good relationship with my mom; we are like friends."
	Open Communication	"I never feel afraid to talk to her about anything."
	Overprotectiveness	"Sometimes, she reacts in an overprotective manner and becomes overly involved in many things."
	Feelings of Pressure and Understanding	"Sometimes she gets upset with me, especially when my grades aren't good, which makes me feel very bad."
	Teaching Resilience	"She continuously teaches me that we need to adapt to our environment and not be afraid of any challenges."
Support and care	Enhance Personal Growth	"If I want to do something, she never stops me; instead, she supports me fully. Even if I make a mistake, she advises me to learn from it."
	Focus on Health and Academics	"My mom has set up a detailed routine for me that covers my health, studies, and exercise."
	Handling Challenges Independently	

	Personal Care	"She emphasizes the importance of handling every task, whether big or small, on our own." "She takes great care of me and supports me in everything."
Balanced Approach	Encouragement of Healthy Habits	"She always advises me to take a balanced approach, which helps me learn more effectively."
	Focus on Career Goal	"My mom wants me to become a doctor, so she has set up a detailed routine for me."
	Learning from Errors	"My mom always says that we should learn from our mistakes. She believes that if we don't learn from our errors, we won't make any progress."

Table 4 Thematic Analysis of Indigenous Parenting Practices, i.e Fathers of Armed Forces Families

Theme	Sub Theme	Verbatim
Acknowledge Father's Intention	of Recognition of Intentions for Benefit Aspirations to Follow in Footsteps Managing Responsibilities Appreciation and Love for Father	"I know he never thinks badly of me. He supports me a lot in every matter and guides me on what I should do and how I should do it." "I understand all of my dad's decisions because he wants me to join the army, just like him." "In the future, I will try to be like him because he manages everything so well, balancing both his job and his family." "I love my dad very much, and he is the best dad in the world."
Disciplinary Role	Strictness and Discipline Emphasis on Studies	"He does get strict at times, and while it may not always feel pleasant, I understand that it is for my own good."

	Learning Discipline	from	"My dad is also quite strict about my studies; he always tells me to focus on my studies so that I can achieve something in the future." "Sometimes, Dad disciplines us when we do something wrong to help us learn for the future."
	Teaching Principles	Life	"He constantly teaches me the principles of life, and I learn a lot from him."
	Guidance on Management	Time	"He always teaches me about time management, which helps me in many ways."
	Guiding Challenges	Through	"He also supports me in learning new things and guides me well by considering the pros and cons of every situation."
Challenges of Military Life	Impact of Relationship Availability	Job on &	"His job means he can't always be around us, and there are times when he is away for months due to postings or routine plans."
	Acceptance Absence	of	"My dad's involvement in my life isn't as extensive because he is often busy with his job."
	Adaptation Military Lifestyle	to	"I understand that this is because of his duty, and he does all this for us, to protect us and to serve our country." "Seeing him makes me happy, and I feel motivated to become like him in the future."
	Distance Communication Effort to Bond Despite Distance Making Time Count Feelings of Missing Out	and	"Due to my dad's postings, I mostly talk to him over the phone, which means I can't share a lot with him, and I often forget to tell him many things I want to." "Even though he doesn't come home often, whenever he does, it makes me really happy. We go out together, and he always tries to make me happy."

"My dad rarely comes home, but as soon as he gets a break, he comes home and spends time with us."

"This is why his involvement in my day-to-day life isn't as much as I would like."

Emotional Connection and support	Deep Love and Affection	and	"I have a lot of love for my dad, and he loves me a lot too."
	Appreciation Efforts	of	"He always tries to make me happy and makes me feel special, which I really appreciate."
	Symbolic Presence through Gifts	and	"Whenever he visits, he brings me lots of gifts that I love."
	Conflict Resolution	and	"Sometimes, when he gets angry, I don't like it, but after a while, he makes it up to me."
	Feeling Safe and Supported	and	"Although this can be intimidating at times, I still feel good with him. I feel safe and supported by him."

	Consistent Financial Support		"Although I occasionally feel like I lack emotional support, he consistently supports me financially."
	Readiness to Provide		
	Encouragement in Academics	in	"I never have to think twice about asking for something; he always gets it for me."
	Activities	and	"He always encourages me to do everything. He tells me to focus on my studies and to participate in different activities."
	Recognition Rewards	and	
	Guidance Decision-Making	in	"He also rewards me for my achievements, which motivates me even more."
			"He advises me to discern what is right and wrong, to learn from everything, and to build my future by studying hard and becoming independent."

Figure 1: Thematic map of Perceived Parenting Styles of Civilian Families

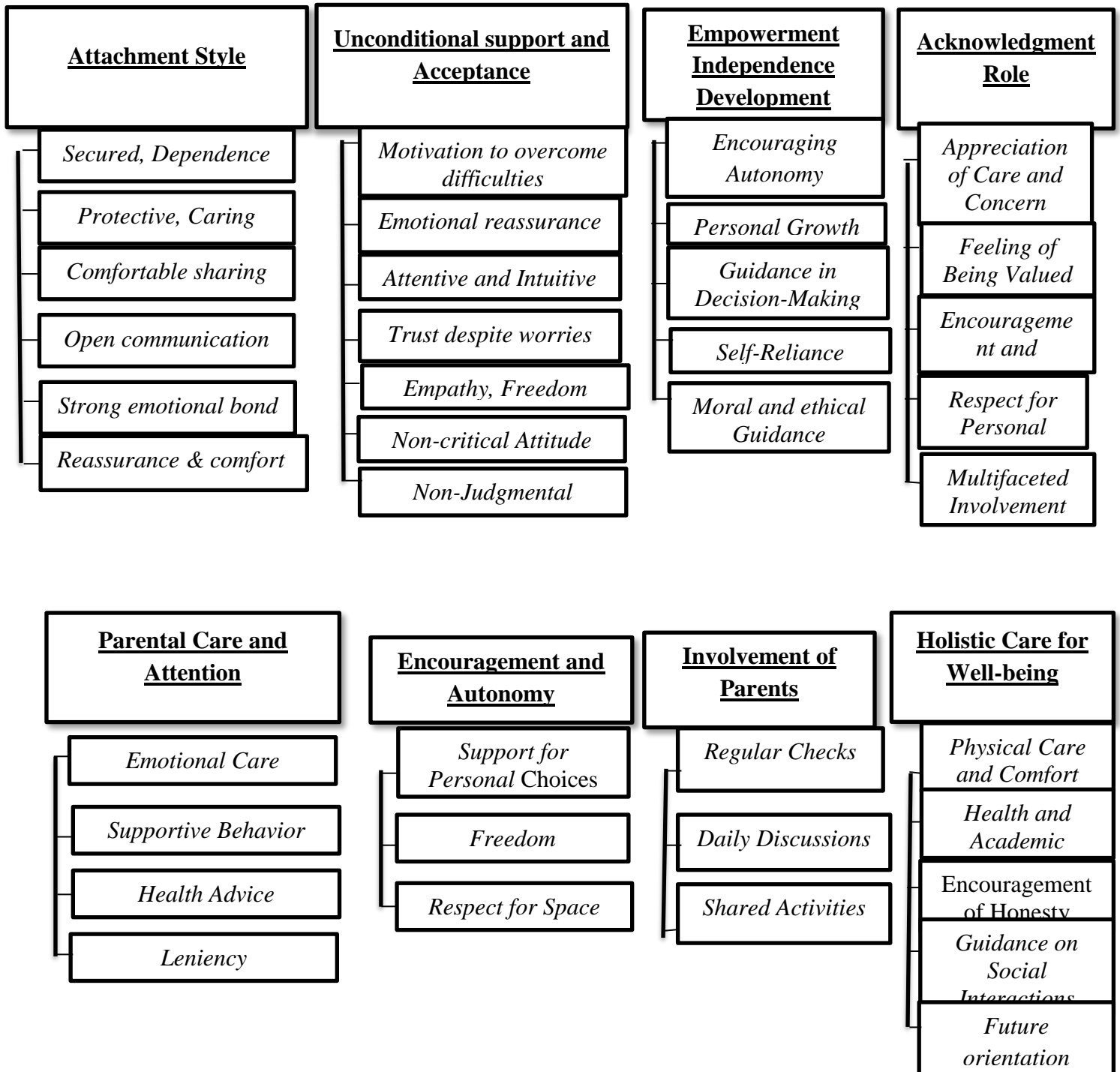
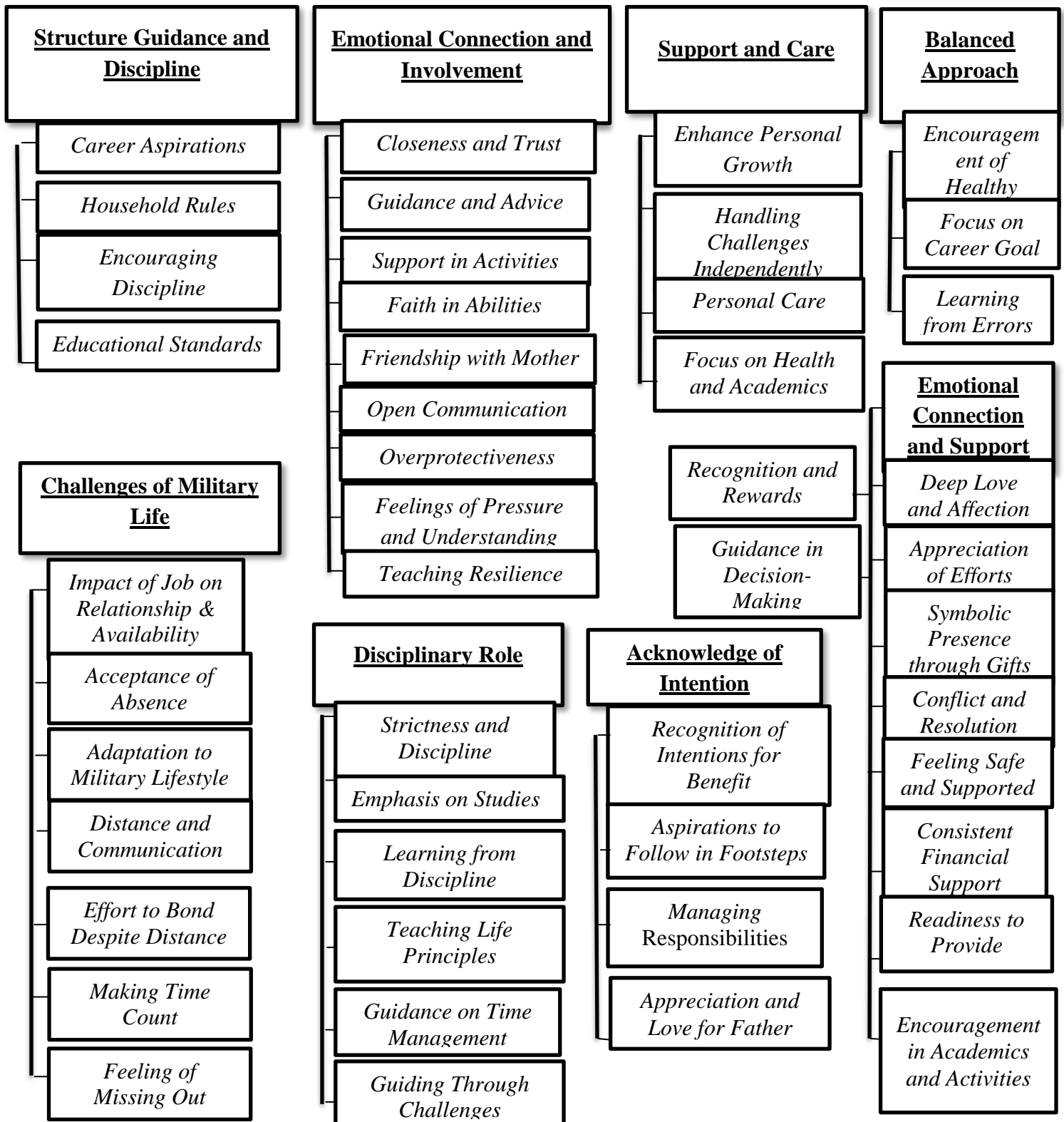


Figure 2: Thematic map of Perceived Parenting Styles of Armed forces Families



Discussion

The current study provides an evaluation of self-regulation and multidimensional well-being among adolescents from armed forces and civilian families. For the purpose of identifying inter-correlations, and to find out the predictors to multidimensional wellbeing and differences among armed forces families and civilian families adolescents; different statistical analysis was computed for generating results. It is notable for being the study in Pakistan to examine these variables comprehensively within these specific family contexts. The findings of the study have provided a wide range of insights into the impact of self-regulation on the multidimensional wellbeing among adolescents from armed forces and civilian families.

Primarily, it was found that results from Pearson product-moment correlation analysis revealing a significant negative relationship between short-term self-regulation and dimensions of multidimensional well-being, including positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment. This implies that increased short-term self-regulation correlates with decreased multidimensional well-being, including positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment. This finding aligns with Zeinali & Ali (2014), who reported that insecurely attached individuals tend to score lower on self-regulation. Conversely, Jain (2018) found a strong negative correlation between psychological well-being and violent behavior, with authoritative parenting contributing to lower levels of such behavior. Mariana et al. (2006) discovered that intense authoritarian parenting was associated with greater stability in causal attribution but lower psychological well-being, which partially supports our research hypothesis results.

The result from another Pearson Product-moment Correlation analysis revealed a significant positive relationship between long-term self-regulation and dimensions of well-being, including positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment. This finding suggests that increased long-term self-regulation enhances multidimensional well-being. Abidin (2022) supported this by showing that supportive parenting fosters adolescent well-being through the satisfaction of basic psychological needs. Similarly, Morosanova et al. (2021) found well-being had a significant impact on self-regulation, while later; self-regulation came forward as a very important resource in maintaining well-being during adolescence across subsequent years. In contrast, Kalhoro (2024) reported a weak negative relationship between authoritative parenting and moderate depression, suggesting that the relationship between self-regulation and well-being might vary depending on other factors. This result of these previous literature proved this research hypothesis result.

Result of linear regression analysis indicated that short-term self-regulation negatively predicted multidimensional well-being, while long-term self-regulation positively predicted multidimensional wellbeing. Previous research findings from Shekhawat (2022), who found that self-regulation was a significant predictor of mental health. Baumeister et al. (2000) noted that

frequent engagement in short-term self-regulation could lead to decreased well-being, while Duckworth et al. (2007) and Moffitt et al. (2011) highlighted the positive impacts of long-term self-regulation on well-being. Rodriguez (2022) found that self-regulatory deficits correlated with negative well-being; supporting our hypothesis that self-regulation predicts multidimensional well-being.

The present study results of the independent samples t-test revealed that adolescents from armed forces families exhibited higher short-term self-regulation scores, while civilian families showed higher long-term self-regulation and greater multidimensional well-being. This supports findings from Patton et al. (2004), which indicated that military training enhances self-regulation skills. Spera et al. (2005) study shows that family dynamics and roles, such as those in armed forces families, can significantly influence self-regulation capacities and psychological outcomes. Conversely, Pietrzak et al. (2014) suggested that military life stressors could complicate self-regulation and well-being, which challenges the generalization of these findings.

In study II presents findings from the thematic analysis of interviews conducted with adolescents from both civilian and armed forces families, examining their relationships with their parents, attachment styles, parenting approaches, and the implications of these factors on their multidimensional well-being. The results are discussed within the framework of existing literature on family dynamics, attachment theory, and the distinct challenges faced by civilian and armed forces families. The study included six adolescents (2 females and 1 male from civilian families, and 2 females and 1 male from armed forces families) aged 14-16 years from Lahore. Baumrind's parenting styles model (1971) was applied to both mothers' and fathers' parenting approaches, revealing that multidimensional well-being was highest among adolescents with authoritative parents and lowest among those with neglectful parents. Notably, permissive parenting styles were found to facilitate multidimensional well-being more than authoritarian and neglectful styles, as also indicated in previous research (Baumrind, 1991).

In the thematic analysis, there was a manifestation of a secure emotional bond between adolescents and their mothers in both civilian and armed forces families. In civilian families, participant expressed their mother as a central figure in their lives with statements such as, "*My mother is a very important part of my life; without her, my life is incomplete,*" showing how strongly attached they were. This nurturance hypothesis is in concert with Bowlby's (1982) attachment theory, in which a secure attachment with a primary caregiver is viewed as a predictor of healthy emotional development. In armed forces families secure attachment was also evident, it emphasis on discipline and structure. One participant reported, "*My mother set any rules and regulations at home and everything must be done on time.*" Halls (2008) studied that military parenting often integrates discipline with emotional support. Despite the strict environment, the secure attachment remained strong as indicated by adolescent freedom in sharing personal details with their mothers.

In civilian families, the sense of security was often associated with open communication and emotional reassurance. Children showed comfort in sharing their thoughts and feelings with their mothers, which indicates a very high level of trust and emotional security. As one participant reported, *“My mom is like a friend to me; I am never scared to tell her anything.”* This openness reflects Ainsworth's (1978) findings that secure attachment provides a sense of security which allows children to explore their emotions without fear of judgment.

Unconditional support from mothers was one of the running themes in both civilian and military families. In civilian families, this support was often expressed through as noncritical attitudes and emotional reassurance. For instance, a participant says, *“She never criticizes me about anything,”* thereby showing that the mother provides him with a feeling of emotional security. This approach is consistent with Baumrind's 1967 authoritative style of parenting, in which warmth and support are combined with appropriate discipline; hence, both emotional security and autonomy are encouraged in the children. While mothers also provided unconditional support in military families, a greater emphasis was placed on resilience and adaptation. One of the participant responded, *“She continuously teaches me that we need to adapt to our environment and not be afraid of any challenges.”* This focus on resilience which shows that the unique challenges faced by military families, such as frequent relocations and the absence of a parent due to deployments, which require children to develop coping mechanisms and adaptability (Paley et al., 2013).

In civilian and armed forces families emphasized importance of fostering independence in their children. In civilian families, this was usually achieved through the encouragement of self-reliance in decision-making and personal growth. A participant reported that, *“My mother always tells me whether things are right or not, but she also says that as I am growing up, I need to handle and understand things in life on my own.”* That means the scaffolding concept: where parents help their children, but they gradually allowing them to take on more responsibility themselves (Wood et al., 1976). Armed forces families emphasize independence, a more disciplined and organized environment, one participant of a military family said, *“She handles many things in my life and guides me on how to manage everything together, how to make decisions, and what things are good for me.”* This structured approach may be influenced by the military's emphasis on discipline and self-reliance, which is often mirrored in the parenting styles of military parents (Park, 2011).

One of the main differences in civilian and military families was the behavior concerning discipline and education. In civilian families, discipline was balanced with emotional support and open communication: parents encouraged their children to make independent decisions while offering guidance and support if necessary. This balanced approach is characteristics of authoritative approach-a parenting style that blends warmth and responsiveness with control and maturity demands-finds broad empirical support as promoting favorable outcomes across a range of developmental outcomes (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Discipline was even more emphasized in military families, coupled with a stronger drive toward academic success and adhering to

household rules. One participant explained their father's approach: *"My dad is also quite strict about my studies; he always tells me to focus on my studies so that I can achieve something in the future."* This emphasis on discipline and accomplishment reflects to the structured nature of military life, where success is generally linked with strict adherence to rules and high performance standards (Cozza et al., 2005).

Fathers from both civilian and military families played crucial roles in providing supportive and guidance appropriately. In civilian families, fathers were more involved in daily life, offering reassurance and comfort. As one of the participant stated, *"Whenever I am afraid of something, my father supports me, reassures me, and tells me that I am not alone."* This involvement agrees with the findings that propose paternal involvement is associated with positive emotional and behavioral development in children (Lamb, 2004). In armed forces families, the fathers were supportive of their children, too, but their involvement was often limited by the demands of military service. The participant mentioned, *"My dad's involvement in my life isn't as extensive because he is often busy with his job. I understand that this is because of his duty, and he does all this for us, to protect us and to serve our country."* However, the armed forces fathers were attempting to be close to their children through symbolic gestures or in quality time during visits. Participant mentioned that *"He always tries to make me happy and makes me feel special, which I really appreciate. Whenever he visits, he brings me lots of gifts that I love."* Riggs & Riggs (2011) studied military families regarding the challenges experienced in keeping the family ties while away on deployment and ways that families deal with such difficulties and challenges.

Discipline was a dominant aspect in the father-child relationship of the armed forces families. Most of the fathers assumed a more authoritative parenting approach, whereby discipline and responsibility were one of the key areas of focus. One of the participant reported, *"My dad is also quite strict about my studies; he always tells me to focus on my studies so that I can achieve something in the future."* *"Sometimes, Dad disciplines us when we do something wrong to help us learn for the future."* This is in support of the observation that the military advocates for discipline and order, hence the spillover effect on family members as an agency of socialization in influencing specific parenting styles (Jensen et al., 1996). Moreover, in civilian families, fathers were involved in disciplining their children, but this is often balanced with emotional support and encouragement: *"My father always supports my choices, which I really appreciate"*. This balance of discipline and support reflects the authoritative parenting style, associated by Baumrind (1991) with positive developmental outcomes.

Military life presents unique challenges that can impact family dynamics, particularly in terms of parental involvement and emotional connection. The frequent absences of military parents due to deployments or postings can lead to feelings of distance and a lack of emotional support. One participant expressed, *"Due to my dad's postings, I mostly talk to him over the phone, which means I can't share a lot with him, and I often forget to tell him many things I want to."* The

research on military families indicates that the difficulties children face in maintaining close relationships with their deployed parents (Cozza et al., 2014).

However, many armed forces families often develop strategies to cope with the demands of military families. Fathers might use technology to stay in contact with their children during deployments one participant said *“Due to my dad's postings, I mostly talk to him over the phone, which means I can't share a lot with him, and I often forget to tell him many things I want to.”* While mothers may take on dual roles to ensure continuity and stability in the family. *“She takes responsibility for guiding us, helping us differentiate between right and wrong, and advising us on how to approach things.”* and *“My mom has set many rules and regulations at home, and everything must be done on time.”* These adaptive strategies are significant in maintaining family cohesion and ensuring emotional well-being of children's (Paley et al., 2013).

The challenges in armed forces life may help children build resilience, wherein they learn how to change from time to time, thus putting coping mechanisms into place. The statements mentioned by one of the children went like this: *“She continuously teaches me that we need to adapt to our environment and not be afraid of any challenges.”* Resilience is one common aspect of military children, as most parents make their children independent or adaptable in case something unfortunate occurs (Lester et al., 2011).

Conclusion

This research highlights the distinct impacts of self-regulation on adolescent well-being across military and civilian families. Study I (quantitative) found that adolescents from armed forces families demonstrated higher short-term self-regulation due to structured environments, but this was linked to lower multidimensional well-being. In contrast, civilian family adolescents exhibited better long-term self-regulation, which correlated with higher well-being. Study II (qualitative) revealed similarities in parental supportiveness and attachment across both family types, though military family dynamics were shaped by the unique demands of military life. These findings suggest a need for tailored family support programs that promote long-term self-regulation and strong emotional bonds, particularly in armed forces families, to enhance adolescents' well-being. The insight developed from study results provided a basis and guidelines for Clinicians to manage the adolescents in need more appropriately in dealing with their challenges incorporating in late adulthood.

Limitations

This study focuses solely on adolescents' perceptions of their parents' parenting styles, self-regulation, and multidimensional well-being, which may limit the findings' generalizability across different cultural, socioeconomic, and familial contexts. Additionally, the mixed method nature of this research only captures short-term effects, and the long-term impact of perceived parenting styles on adolescents' self-regulation and multidimensional well-being remains underexplored further longitudinal studies.

Implications

The study's findings offer valuable insights for parenting education programs, helping parents adopt practices that foster self-regulation and multidimensional well-being in adolescents. Mental health professionals can leverage these insights to develop tailored interventions addressing family dynamics, communication, and coping strategies. Moreover, the unique challenges faced by adolescents from armed forces families highlight the need for targeted support from schools and community services during their transition between military and civilian environments. Finally, these insights emphasize the potential for policymakers to promote positive parenting early in a child's life, reducing future mental health risks and enhancing long-term self-regulation and multidimensional well-being

Recommendations

Indigenous scales in the native language of the adolescents should be developed with respect to their besieged problem, age and understanding. Clinical Psychologists should counsel these adolescents and their families free of cost to make them feel happy. Help them to manage their stress and other behavioral problems that might create hindrance in their psychological growth.

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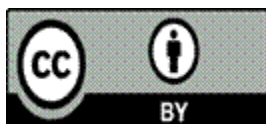
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