



Emotion Regulation Strategies of Young Adults and Their Caregivers: A Qualitative Analysis

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Introduction

- Emotion regulation (ER) and strategies are important
 - Associated with psychopathology and mental disorders (Aldao, Nolen-Hoeksema & Schweizer, 2010)
 - Problems in working life (Rotaru, 2015) or social life (Verboom et al., 2014) and so on.
- Known to be affected by caregivers' emotion regulation
 - Emotion dysregulation: parents → young adults (Xu et al., 2020)

Background

		Bariola et al. (2012)	Silva et al. (2018)	Wald et al. (2020)
Suppression	Mothers	✓	✓	not included
	Fathers	✗	✗	not included
Reappraisal	Mothers	✗	✓	✓
	Fathers	✗	✗	not included



Background

- Chen (2015)
 - asking, reasoning, displaying emotions and describing are similar between the child and the parents.
- Limited research does not cover
 - Young adults' ER
 - Other caregivers' effects
 - Other factors that affect ER strategy choice
 - Qualitative data



Research question

- What are the views of young adults on
 - how they regulate their emotions
 - which ER strategies their caregivers use
 - the factors affecting their ER, including caregivers' strategies?



Method

- Sample
 - 14 Turkish young adults between the ages of 19-23
 - 8 women and 6 men ($M = 21.5$, $SD = 1.24$)
- Procedure
 - Demographics form
 - Audio recorded semi-structured interviews
 - ER strategies of young adults
 - ER strategies of their caregivers
 - Other factors that affect ER
 - Diaries, two weeks



Method

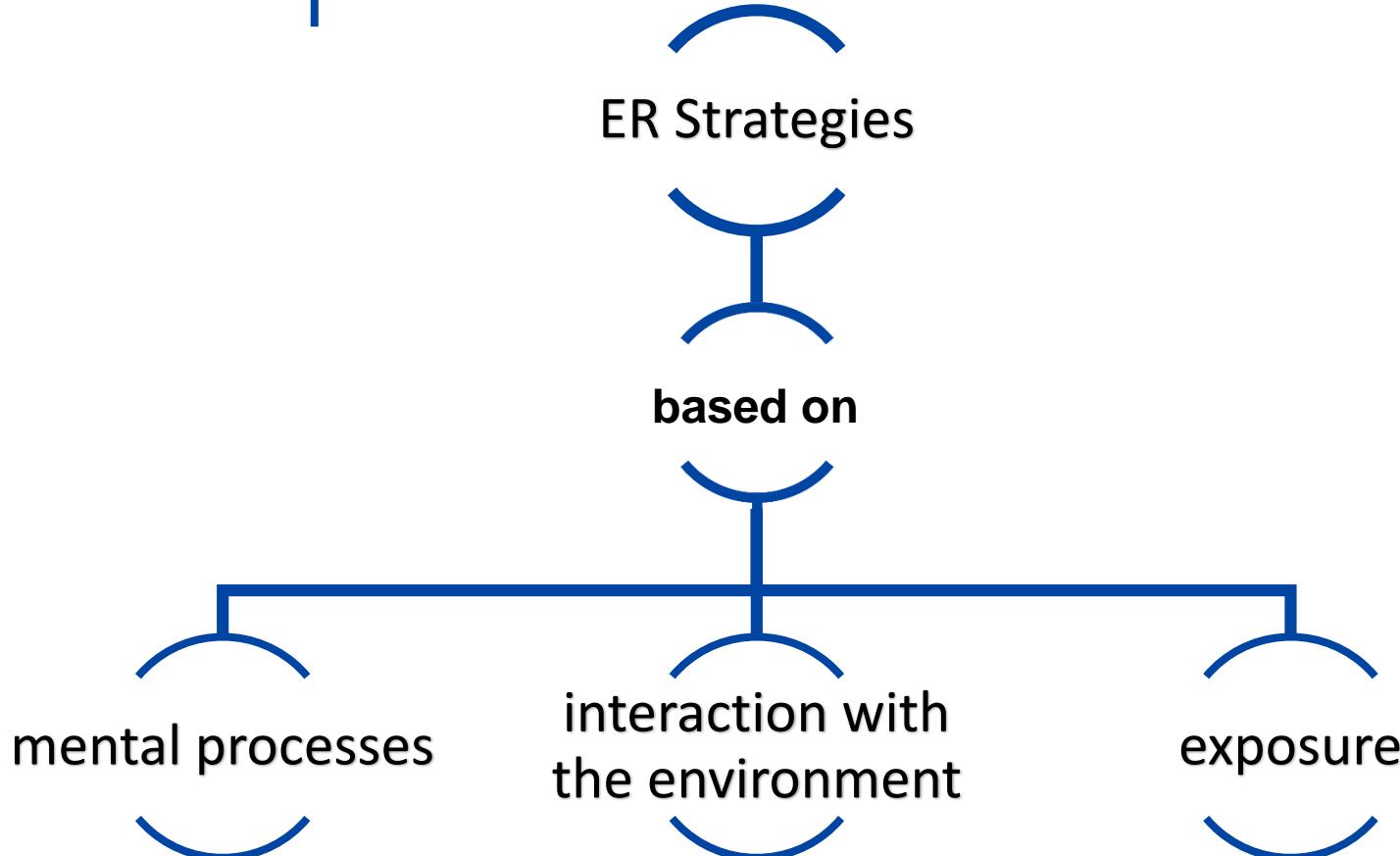
- Analysis
 - Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006)
 1. Becoming familiar
 2. Initial codes
 3. Potential themes
 4. Reviewing possible themes
 5. Defining and naming themes
 6. Reporting



Method

Data	Code	Notes	Participant
My mom yells when she is angry, then cries, then she calms down.	yelling angry, emotion crying calming down		P1
I also cry when I am angry. ...it makes me a little bit more comfortable	crying angry, emotion more comfortable	functional similarity	P1 P3
to be able to harm things around me or myself in some way.	harming things/myself		P3

Findings



- Mental processes (53 times)
 - Recognition
 - Reappraisal
 - Control
- Interaction with the environment (54 times)
 - Expression
 - Social support
 - Aggression
 - Problem solving
- Exposure (83 times)
 - Avoidance
 - Exposure

Findings

- Participant 4: «If I feel an intense emotion, thinking about it is my way of dealing with it...I mean, why did I feel this, what is the purpose of this emotion...should I feel it?»
- Participant 3: «...and even though it is not right, it makes me a little bit more comfortable to be able to harm things around me or myself in some way.»
- Participant 5: «...sometimes I buy food, I eat and that makes me happier...sometimes I spend a day without thinking about exams or homework, without studying. For example, I did something like that yesterday, I didn't go to school...watched a movie. I try to do this kind of fun stuff.»
- Mental processes (53 times)
 - Recognition
 - Reappraisal
 - Control
- Interaction with the environment (54 times)
 - Expression
 - Social support
 - Aggression
 - Problem solving
- Exposure (83 times)
 - Avoidance
 - Exposure



Findings

		Participants	Examples
Mother	Similarities	P1, P3, P4, P5, P6, P9, P10, P12, P13, P14	P1: My mom cries first, then prays like me.
	Learning	P3, P5, P8, P9, P12	P8: My mother explained the importance of breathing exercises, so breathing exercise is the method I used when I was very anxious...
Father	Similarities	P1, P2, P3, P4, P6, P7, P8, P11, P12, P13, P14	P7: He also talks to people if it's something he can talk about.
	Learning	P3, P5, P8, P10, P12	P12: ...maybe yes, I saw that my father was smoking when he was under stress, that is, in my childhood, maybe that's why I started smoking when I was stressed.
Other	Learning	P10	P10: Gardening is definitely something I learned from my grandmother...dealing with the soil comforts me when I am angry.

Note. P = Participant



Findings

- Similar or not?
 - Participant 1: «My mom cries first, then prays like me...**my mom yells when she is angry, then cries**, then she calms down. I also cry when I am angry.»
 - Participant 1: «**Like I said, mine isn't like my mom's anyway. My mother has no effect.**»
 - Participant 6: «For example, **she also started watching a lot of TV series...she also calls me and talks to me.**»
 - Participant 6: «I mean, **I don't do what she does in her daily life.**»

Findings

- «Why do you think you use these methods when regulating your emotions?»

Family

P9: ...I see people around me doing the same. People always sit in cafes, spend time with their friends...because that's their style, and of course, stemming from the family, parenting style...You know how your family copes with, you do it that way.

Others

Characteristics

P1: Since I am an active person...since childhood, walking is a hobby that I love. That's why I use it.

Avoiding harm

P10: I don't want to hurt anyone or myself...doing things that would have no effect on anyone, things that only affect myself.

Features of the strategies

P11: ...I use these right now, because these are the things that make me feel good.



Discussion

- In a nutshell,
 - Strategies based on mental processes, interaction with the environment and exposure
 - Statements of similarities and learning
 - Other factors that affect ER
 - Daily use of strategies



Discussion

- Consistent with existing literature
 - Similarities between child and mother (Bariola et al., 2012; Silva et al., 2018)
 - Learning through observational learning, modeling and social referencing (Morris et al., 2007)



Discussion

- Contributions
 - Similarities between young adults and fathers, other caregivers
 - Oppositions about being similar
 - Importance of qualitative data and analysis
 - Young adults' views on the factors that affect their ER
 - Daily use of ER strategies



Limitations

- Turkish young adults
- Recall difficulties or biases due to self-report of experiences
- Missing information about caregivers' ER



Future directions

- Most research has only focused on suppression and reappraisal (Naragon-Gainey et al., 2017).
- Similarities between children and their caregivers (Bariola et al., 2012; Silva et al., 2018)
- ER strategies are not only affected by caregivers but also many other factors.



Thank You!

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Q&A

- What did we ask about young adults' ER strategies?
 - Warm-up questions:
 - What comes to your mind when you think of emotion?
 - What do you generally feel in your daily life?
 - Main purpose:
 - Sometimes some of our emotions can disturb us. Our emotions can be too much or too little. How do you regulate your emotions at times like this?



Q&A

- What did we ask about caregivers' ER strategies?
 - Warm-up questions:
 - Do you notice your ... emotions?
 - With what emotions does she/he usually react to daily events?
 - Main purpose:
 - How does she/he regulate her/his emotions?
 - When you think of your ... and yourself together in terms of regulating your emotions, is there anything you think you learned from them?



Q&A

- What did we ask in online diaries?
 - What were the positive situations you experienced today and yesterday?
 - What were the negative situations you experienced today and yesterday?
 - What emotions did you feel after these situations?
 - What have you done to maintain/increase/decrease these emotions?