Parenting and Forgiveness as Predictors of Internalizing Symptoms in Emerging Adults:

Exploring Gender-Specific Pathways with or without Perceived Maltreatment

By

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to all who deserve better and fairer parenting.

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Abstract

Emerging adults are at increased risk of developing internalizing symptoms, emphasizing the need to examine protective and risk factors in this challenging period. Although the link between parenting behaviors in childhood or adolescence and offspring's internalizing symptoms is established, and forgiveness is recognized for its mental health benefits, less is known about how current parenting behaviors may interact with forgiveness toward parents to affect emerging adults' internalizing symptoms. Additionally, the potential influence of the gender of both parents and offspring in these dynamics has yet to be thoroughly examined. Considering the context of maltreatment histories which can profoundly influence individuals during this critical developmental stage, this study aims to investigate among emerging adults with and without maltreatment histories, how parental warmth, overparenting, and forgiveness toward parents may affect internalizing symptoms in different parent-offspring dyads. Utilizing two waves of online surveys, this study collected self-reported data on perceived parental warmth, overparenting, forgiveness, internalizing symptoms, perceptions of parental maltreatment, and experiences of hurt with parents. Additionally, it included parent-reported data on warmth, overparenting, and their internalizing symptoms. Due to the limited sample size in the second wave ($N = 54$) and the parent-report data ($N = 65$), the analysis predominantly focused on the cross-sectional data from emerging adults' self-reports ($N = 834$). The findings reveal that 26.4% of emerging adults experienced parental maltreatment, and approximately 70% reported hurtful experiences with the mother or the father. For emerging adults with maltreatment histories, increased forgiveness can enhance the benefits of high parental warmth or low overparenting in mother-daughter and father-son dyads. For those without maltreatment histories, forgiveness generally reduced internalizing symptoms and buffered against the effects of low warmth and high overparenting,

especially in mother-daughter and father-daughter dyads. These results highlight the prevalence of hurt from parents and the importance of forgiveness in dealing with such experiences. The different roles of current parental warmth and overparenting suggest the complex gender-specific pathways through which internalizing symptoms develop, emphasizing the need to consider maltreatment histories in fostering better adjustment during emerging adulthood.

Keywords: parenting, forgiveness, internalizing symptoms, emerging adults, maltreatment

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Introduction

Emerging adulthood has been considered a distinct period of the developmental stage during which individuals transition from dependent adolescents to independent adults (Arnett, 2000a). During this period, some emerging adults may exhibit higher well-being levels, whereas others may experience worsening depression and anxiety symptoms (Galambos et al., 2006; Reinherz et al., 2003). It is, therefore, crucial to identify protective and risk factors for internalizing problems in emerging adulthood to provide refined prevention and intervention services for emerging adults.

Notably, the vast majority of young adults in America were found to have an active relationship with at least one parent figure (Hartnett et al., 2018). The transition to emerging adulthood is thought to prolong the duration of active parenting behaviors, by which parents could still significantly influence emerging adulthood adults' well-being (Arnett, 2000a; Keijser et al., 2020). While research has shown that parenting in childhood and adolescence has long-term effects on emerging adult's mental health (Aquilino & Supple, 2001; Rothrauff et al., 2009; Taillieu & Brownridge, 2013), less research has examined the role of current parenting in the association between parental and offspring internalizing symptoms during emerging adulthood (Howard et al., 2022; Lowe & Dotterer, 2018). As individuals strive for a new balance in the parent-offspring relationship to meet growing autonomy needs (Aquilino, 2006), it is important for current parenting behaviors to provide certain levels of support but not harm the offspring's autonomy. Therefore, the current study focused on parental warmth and overparenting to further examine their protective and risky roles.

It is worth noting that negative parent-offspring interactions tend to be more salient for offspring's well-being than positive interactions (Baumeister et al., 2001; Gilligan et al., 2015).

Conversely, forgiveness might be a protective factor that buffers the negative effects of hurtful parent-offspring interactions. For instance, forgiveness has been shown to be beneficial to individuals' general mental well-being (e.g., Kline Rhoades et al., 2007; Toussaint & Friedman, 2009; Witvliet & McCullough, 2007; Ysseldyk et al., 2007). It is possible that the offspring's forgiveness toward parents can protect the offspring against parental transgression (Paleari et al., 2003) and enhance the effects of positive parenting to improve mental health (Zhang et al., 2023). Nevertheless, the role of forgiveness within the family context is less understood (Fincham, 2010). Hence, it is important to justify the necessity of forgiveness toward parents further and examine the potential interactive effects of parental warmth, overparenting, and forgiveness.

Moreover, previous studies have emphasized that maternal and paternal parenting may have distinct roles and differentially affect internalizing symptoms (Kaczynski et al., 2006; Luster & Okagaki, 2006; Rohner, 1998). Parents may also treat daughters and sons differently, and these gender-differentiated parenting behaviors from childhood or adolescence may continue into emerging adulthood (Nelson et al., 2007). Considering offspring forgiveness toward each parent may also differ (Hoyt et al., 2005), it is plausible that the strength of the relationships between parenting, forgiveness toward parents, and offspring internalizing symptoms may vary depending on the influences of parenting and forgiveness in mother-son, mother-daughter, father-son, and father-daughter dyads during emerging adulthood.

Research has argued that child maltreatment represents a significant disturbance in the caregiving environment that can hinder people's normative development across the life span (Cicchetti, 2013; Cicchetti & Toth, 2005) and can have more severe influences on adults' mental health than mild or moderate poor parenting (Miller-Perrin et al., 2009). Given that emerging

adulthood represents a turning point in pathways to positive or negative psychological development (Schulenberg et al., 2005) and that most child maltreatment occurs within families, with the majority (76.0%) of perpetrators being a parent to their victims (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2024), it is important to expand understanding of whether vulnerable young adults who experienced parental maltreatment in the past have distinct pathways linking current parenting, forgiveness, and internalizing symptoms.

Taken together, the main research purposes are to:

1. qualitatively and quantitatively assess the frequency and types of hurtful parental factors, based on emerging adults' narratives of hurtful experiences in parent-offspring interactions. Providing a comprehensive overview of the prevalence and nature of these experiences fosters a deeper understanding of the necessity of forgiveness in the parent-offspring context.

2. investigate the relationship between current parenting behaviors, forgiveness, and internalizing symptoms for emerging adults with or without parental maltreatment histories, specifically examining whether and how forgiveness toward parents can interact with parental warmth and overparenting to contribute to enhancing overall mental health in different parent-offspring dyads.

Literature Review

Define Emerging Adulthood

The theory of emerging adulthood proposed by Arnett (2000a) recognized that the years from approximately 18 to 25 was a distinct period of the developmental stage during which people make the transition from dependent adolescents to independent adults, which has been widely accepted to include the age range of 18 to 29 (Tanner & Arnett, 2016). Five main features distinguish emerging adulthood, including the age of identity explorations, the age of instability, the most self-focused age of life, the age of feeling in-between, and the age of possibilities (Arnett, 2014).

First, emerging adulthood is the age of identity exploration. Identity versus role confusion was not merely the crisis of adolescence in contemporary industrialized societies since Erik Erikson proposed the psychosocial theory of human development around 1950 (Erikson, 1993). Most identity exploration happens in emerging adulthood as this period offers opportunities for offspring to become more independent but not enter the typical adult stage, such as long-term jobs, marriage, and parenthood. Second, related to the changes in education, work, and relationships, emerging adults also have a high rate of residential changes, such as moving out of their parental home and moving back home frequently during the 20s (Bumpass & Lu, 2000), demonstrating the instability of this age period. Third, different than adolescents who typically live with parents all the time with the need to follow the rules established by parents, and also before entering enduring obligations of adult roles, emerging adults can be self-focused to make relatively independent decisions and explore identities (Arnett, 1998). Fourth, given the common criteria for adulthood, including accepting responsibility, making independent decisions, and being financially independent (Arnett, 1994), it is unsurprising that most emerging adults begin

to feel adult by the age of 18 or 19, but do not have the feeling of being completely adult until mid-to late-20s (Arnett, 2001). Fifth, emerging adulthood is the age of possibilities that provides opportunities to explore identities and make independent decisions with great optimism for the future (Arnett, 2000b). Moreover, by simply leaving home, emerging adulthood can provide crucial opportunities, especially for young people who used to live in unhealthy family environments, turning their lives in a better direction for the expression of resilience (Schulenberg et al., 2005).

Internalizing Problems in Emerging Adulthood

Internalizing problems such as depression and anxiety are prevalent mental problems worldwide. The lifetime prevalence of major depressive disorder is estimated to affect up to 21% of the general population (Erikson, 1993), and approximately 33.7% of the population might be affected by an anxiety disorder during their lifetime (Bandelow & Michaelis, 2022). Emerging adults are also at increased risk of developing internalizing problems at this stressful time when transiting from adolescence to adulthood (Park et al., 2006). According to a review of epidemiological studies in the U.S. (Kessler et al., 2005), the 12-month prevalence of mental disorders, such as mood and anxiety disorders, is more than 40% in emerging adulthood, higher than that in any other age range. More recently, Williams et al. (2023) found that more than 80 percent of American college students reported depression symptoms, and more than 60 percent reported anxiety symptoms.

The increased rates of internalizing problems might be informed by the distinct challenges that young people face in emerging adulthood. For instance, according to the main features of emerging adulthood, instability characterized by frequent changes of residence and self-focused tendency are associated with low social support, which is related to depression in

this period (Arnett & Schwab, 2012; Pettit et al., 2011). Emerging adults worldwide also experienced a global economic recession since 2012 and the COVID-19 pandemic since 2019; the decrease in wages, employment prospects, and job security led to greater risk of depression and anxiety symptoms via the impact on identity exploration difficulties, the stress of feeling in-between, and decreased optimism (Arnett et al., 2014; Ganson et al., 2021; Moreno, 2012). However, the developmental mechanisms of internalizing disorders in emerging adulthood are not well understood, and the mental health systems have not yet adapted to the developmental characteristics of emerging adulthood (Tanner & Arnett, 2013). To prevent high-risk emerging adults from developing diagnostic depression and anxiety disorders and to improve targeted mental health services, it is crucial to understand the predictors of emerging adults internalizing symptoms.

Parenting and Internalizing Problems

Link Parenting with Offspring Internalizing Problems

One factor that has been constantly associated with offspring's internalizing problems is parenting. Since Baumrind (1971) identified three parenting styles: authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive, this typology was subsequently modified by Maccoby and Martin (1983). They proposed two major dimensions on which studies of parenting behaviors are largely based: responsiveness and demandingness (Collins et al., 2000). Responsiveness (or warmth, acceptance) refers to the extent to which parents accept, support, and are sensitive to the offspring's needs. Demandingness (or control) is the extent to which the parents have expectations for the offspring's mature behaviors and enforce disciplinary strategies.

On the one hand, one approach intended to link parenting with offspring outcomes focused on the four parenting styles based on the two dimensions, which are authoritative,

authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful. Research has shown that children of authoritative parents (high levels of both responsiveness and demandingness) have better overall adjustment (Baumrind, 1991), whereas children of parents with authoritarian styles (low on responsiveness and high on demandingness), permissive styles (high on responsiveness and low on demandingness), neglectful styles (low levels of both responsiveness and demandingness) at greater risk for negative outcomes, such as internalized problems (Rankin Williams et al., 2009; Steinberg et al., 1994).

On the other hand, another approach to investigate the relationship between parenting and offspring outcome focused on particular parenting practices or behaviors. The commonly studied parenting behaviors are still based on the two dimensions (Gorostiaga et al., 2019), in which warmth and hostility derive from the responsiveness dimension, and behavioral control and psychological control derive from the demandingness dimension (McKee et al., 2008; Pinquart, 2017). However, it is important to note that specific parenting behaviors require distinguishing between positive and negative parenting rather than treating it as a continuum. For example, hostility is not merely a lack of warmth but includes criticizing, accusing, ridiculing, rejecting, and nagging (Berg-Nielsen et al., 2002). Additionally, control can be classified into positive or negative control based on whether parental control inhibits children's psychological development, which subsequently links to positive or negative offspring outcomes. Specifically, behavioral control, which has been defined as parental monitoring and limit setting, is associated with fewer internalizing problems (Barber et al., 1994; Loeber & Stouthamer-Loeber, 1986), whereas psychological control refers to the manipulation and intrusion of children's emotional and cognitive worlds (Barber, 2002), has been associated with more internalizing problems (Pinquart, 2017). Parental warmth and behavioral control have been inversely related to

internalizing symptoms, whereas hostility and psychological control are positively associated with internalizing problems in childhood and adolescence (Gorostiaga et al., 2019; Rose et al., 2018).

Whereas a large amount of research regarding the influences of parenting on offspring typically focused on childhood and adolescence (Yap et al., 2014; Yap & Jorm, 2015), research also has found that parenting in childhood and adolescence has long-term effects on emerging adult's mental health. For instance, early remembered parenting styles in childhood, aggressive parental discipline parenting in childhood, and coercive parental control in adolescence were associated with later offspring outcomes, including internalizing problems in adulthood (Aquilino & Supple, 2001; Rothrauff et al., 2009; Taillieu & Brownridge, 2013). However, parenting or the effects of parenting may be different in emerging adulthood than in childhood or adolescence. During this distinctive stage of life, emerging adults are likely to remain connected to the family of origin but on the road to independence from parents, leading to new expectations and patterns of interaction among parent-child dyads (Aquilino, 2006). Moreover, emerging adults have unique needs to gain autonomy while maintaining certain levels of parental support (Arnett, 2000a), implying that ineffective parenting behaviors in emerging adulthood that are not well adjusted to emerging adult psychosocial needs can lead to offspring's maladjustment (McKinney et al., 2016). Therefore, it is important to explore further how current parenting during emerging adulthood could link to offspring adjustments.

Parenting in Emerging Adulthood

Although limited work examines current parenting in emerging adulthood, McKinney and Renk (2008a, 2008b) found that emerging adults' perceptions of current parenting styles were related to their emotional adjustment—nevertheless, Nelson et al. (2011) found that in the

U.S., parenting clusters during emerging adulthood were not fully consistent with parenting styles during childhood and adolescence. They classified parental knowledge, warmth, induction, and autonomy granting as the warmth dimension, and classified psychological control, punishment, verbal hostility, and indulgence as the control dimension. They also label the control dimension as "extremes of control", as high scores of these measures represented higher levels of negative parenting. The results showed that authoritative mothers (high on warmth and low on control) and inconsistent mothers (above the mean on warmth and control) had offspring with the lowest levels of depression and anxiety, suggesting that supportive parenting behaviors are still needed for emerging adult children to thrive. Nelson et al. also found that uninvolved mothers (low on control and warmth) were not associated with the most negative offspring outcome, whereas controlling mothers (high on control but low on warmth) were associated with the highest levels of depression and anxiety. These results highlighted that higher levels of parental warmth are typically associated with more adaptive adjustment in emerging adulthood regardless of the control. However, reducing negative parental control contributes to the most effective parenting in emerging adulthood.

Similarly, Parra et al. (2019) examined how current parenting styles might affect emerging adults' adjustment in Spain and Portugal. However, different than Nelson et al. (2011), who focused on the extremes or negative aspects of parental control, Parra et al. classified parenting styles by parental warmth and behavioral control, in which behavioral control is also linked with adolescents' better adjustment in Spain (Jaureguizar et al., 2018). Therefore, they characterized the authoritative style as high warmth and high control, the authoritarian style as low warmth and high control, and the permissive style as high warmth and low control. Results showed that emerging adults with parents of an authoritarian style had higher internalizing

symptoms than those with a permissive style. Permissive style and authoritative styles also were associated with higher levels of well-being. In contrast with greater permissive parenting related to more internalizing problems in the childhood (Rankin Williams et al., 2009), the results highlighted the importance of parental warmth and the benefits of reducing parental control for ensuring good adjustment during emerging adulthood.

Taken together, positive parenting in emerging adulthood is similar to other developmental stages and tends to be beneficial for offspring outcomes. In contrast, maintaining control may be particularly detrimental during emerging adulthood due to the offspring's increasing need for autonomy (Love, 2016). Parents need to adjust to the changing needs of offspring, which requires adequate parental warmth and less control in emerging adulthood.

The Role of Parental Warmth and Overparenting

As stated above, it is important to consider the collective influences of parenting behaviors in the responsive and demandingness dimensions on offspring's internalizing problems. The current study, therefore, focused on parental warmth and overparenting not only based on these dimensions but also considering the importance of emerging adults' unique dependency and autonomy needs.

Due to its profound impact on offspring's psychosocial well-being, parental warmth (or love and affection) has received extensive theoretical and empirical attention. To further understand the underlying mechanisms, the parental acceptance-rejection theory (PARTheory) which was built on the work of Maccoby and Martin (1983) and their responsiveness dimension, proposed parental acceptance and rejection as a bipolar dimension (Rohner, 1975, 1986). On the positive end of the dimension is parental acceptance, which refers to the caring, involvement, positive affect, and positive support parents express toward the offspring. On the negative end is

parental rejection, which refers to the absence or withdrawal of warmth, affection, or love, and the presence of physically and psychologically hurtful behaviors and affects. PARTheory also proposed that humans have the phylogenetically acquired need for positive responses or love from significant others. Children whose need for positive responses is met by parents are likely to develop low hostility and aggression, independence, positive self-esteem, positive self-adequacy, emotional stability, emotional responsiveness, and positive worldview. Whereas children who feel rejected may develop problems with anger, hostility, aggression, passive aggression, dependence or defensive independence, negative self-esteem, negative self-adequacy, emotional instability, emotional unresponsiveness, and negative worldview (Rohner, 2004). As children grow into adulthood, these personality dispositions tend to have significant impacts on the individual's psychosocial adjustment throughout the lifespan (Khaleque, 2013; Khaleque & Rohner, 2002). Indeed, empirical studies supported PARTheory that high levels of parental warmth are associated with lower levels of internalizing symptoms and, conversely, the lower level of or the lack of parental warmth is a robust factor predicting more internalizing symptoms in children and adolescents worldwide (e.g., Hipwell et al., 2008; Liu & Merritt, 2018; McLeod, Weisz, et al., 2007; McLeod, Wood et al., 2007; Merikangas et al., 2009).

Based on the demandingness dimension and considering the special needs of emerging adults, overparenting has been proposed as an overcontrolling parental practice that can be especially detrimental to emerging adults (Perez et al., 2020; Schiffrin et al., 2014). Overparenting, or helicopter parenting, was first developed by Cline and Fay (1990) to describe parents hovering around and ready to resolve problems for their children. Segrin et al. (2012) defined overparenting as developmentally inappropriate parenting characterized by overinvolvement in offspring's lives and decision-making, driven by parents' desires to ensure

offspring's success and protect children from challenges and obstacles, which is not a new parenting dimension but rather a unique parenting pattern composed of overinvolved and restrictive parenting behaviors that discourage independence or autonomy (LeMoyne & Buchanan, 2011; Schiffrin et al., 2014). According to the self-determination theory (SDT) (Ryan & Deci, 2000), people must satisfy three basic psychological needs to psychologically thrive, including autonomy, competence, and relatedness. From this theoretical perspective, overparenting could lead to offspring's internalizing symptoms mainly by threatening the need for autonomy, which refers to the need to self-regulate an individual's experiences and actions. Given that the need for autonomy can be more salient during emerging adulthood, it is not surprising that overparenting was related to more offspring internalizing symptoms among emerging adults (Cui et al., 2019; Darlow et al., 2017; Schiffrin et al., 2019). In addition, overparenting has been found to predict more emerging adults' internalizing symptoms through not only the needs frustration for autonomy, but also competence (the need to feel effectance and mastery) and relatedness (the need to feel socially connected) in both U.S. and China sample (Hong, 2021), supporting the SDT theory controlling parenting can frustrate offspring's basic psychological needs, thereby hindering their healthy development (Grolnick, 2002).

However, it is noteworthy that there have been inconsistent findings. For instance, some researchers found that overparenting was positively associated with psychological adjustment and life satisfaction among emerging adults (Fingerman et al., 2012) and not associated with depression among adolescents or young adult concussion patients (Trbovich et al., 2022). One possible reason is that certain parental involvement can benefit offspring's psychosocial development, whereas there is disagreement on to what extent parental involvement is excessive pertaining to overparenting behaviros (Howard et al., 2022). Moreover, overparenting has been

found to be harmful to emerging adults' adjustment when paired with low levels of warmth, whereas overparenting paired with high levels of warmth was related to lower levels of risk behaviors and depression (Nelson et al., 2015; Padilla-Walker et al., 2021). It is possible that if emerging adults generally experienced high levels of parental warmth, overparenting might not be perceived as a violation of three basic needs. Therefore, the present study examines both parental warmth and overparenting in order to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of how current parenting behaviors could predict internalizing symptoms in emerging adults.

Forgiveness and Internalizing Problems

Link Forgiveness with Internalizing Problems

Enright's theory of interpersonal forgiveness has defined forgiveness as a moral virtue, which is overcoming resentment toward the offender while responding with benevolence to the offender, even if the offender does not deserve the forgiver's moral goodness (Enright et al., 1992; Enright & Fitzgibbons, 2015). To understand the definition of forgiveness, it is important to clarify what forgiveness is not. Forgiveness is not denial or being unwilling to perceive or remove awareness of the offense. It also differs from reconciliation, which involves restoring the relationship, and condoning, which implies dismissing the offense without addressing the need for forgiveness (Enright et al., 1998; Enright, 2019). In sum, forgiveness does not mean forgetting or excusing the offense, suppressing feelings of anger, or abandoning efforts to seek legal justice. On the other hand, forgiveness is a process, taking time and effort to practice this moral virtue, gradually transforming the negative affects, behaviors, and cognitions to positive affects (e.g., compassion, benevolence, and love), behaviors (e.g., no longer acting out the revenge) and cognitions (e.g., ceasing condemning judgments) toward the offenders (Enright & Fitzgibbons, 2015). Therefore, true forgiveness requires the acknowledgment of wrongdoing,

decreasing one's hostility or desire to retaliate against the transgressor (Enright & Fitzgibbons, 2000), and is an active choice (Hantman & Cohen, 2010).

Although true forgiveness is a difficult process to accomplish, by gaining relief from negative emotions and increasing positive emotions, forgiveness is associated with improved mental health and well-being (Kline Rhoades et al., 2007; Toussaint & Friedman, 2009; Ysseldyk et al., 2007). Additionally, forgiveness may enhance adaptive coping strategies and positive reinterpretation (Jeter & Brannon, 2016; Weinberg et al., 2014), contributing to less mood disturbance (Friedman et al., 2007), less rumination (McCullough et al., 2007), suicidal behavior (Hirsch et al., 2012), and depression symptoms (Toussaint et al., 2008). Forgiveness interventions also have been found to result in fewer internalizing symptoms. For instance, forgiveness therapy helped to reduce depression, trait anxiety, and posttraumatic stress symptoms among women after spousal emotional abuse (Reed & Enright, 2006), reduce anxiety, depression, and anger for female acid-attack victims in Pakistan (Haroon et al., 2021) and for men in a maximum-security correctional institution (Yu et al., 2021). A meta-analysis has also shown that forgiveness education is associated with reducing anger for children and adolescents who experience hurt from the unjust actions of others (Rapp et al., 2022).

For emerging adults, offense-specific forgiveness toward an offender or forgiveness tendencies were also found to be significantly related to less internalizing symptoms (Orcutt, 2006), lower levels of aggression (Webb et al., 2012), and higher levels of happiness among college students (Yalçın & Malkoç, 2015). However, the role of forgiveness within the family context is still poorly understood (Fincham, 2010). Considering the interpersonal nature of forgiveness, any complete understanding should include the type of relationship between the victim and the offender, with different relationships serving different roles and needs (Baskin &

Enright, 2004; McCullough & Hoyt, 2002). Moreover, closer relationships, such as parent-offspring relationships, may bring greater hurt from transgressions. However, with initial reactions such as negative affect opposite to forgiveness, victims can have more motivation to maintain the close relationship (Gold & Davis, 2005), which highlights the complexity of forgiveness in parent-offspring relationships. Therefore, it is important to further investigate the types of offspring's hurt caused by parents to better understand the uniqueness of forgiveness toward parents.

Hurtful Parental Behaviors, Events, and other Factors

Limited research regarding the hurtful parental factors perceived by offspring and different terms used suggests that the dynamics of forgiveness in the family context are not fully understood. Some researchers focused on hurt feelings in the family (e.g., McLaren & Sillars, 2014; Mills et al., 2002), in which hurt can be defined as a social emotion caused by relational transgression or relational devaluation, signaling individual is less important, close, or valuable than individual thought (Vangelisti, 1994). Mills et al. (2002) asked school-aged children to recall an instance when their mother had said or done something that hurt their feelings. Two types of messages recalled by children emerged, including discipline and disparagement/disregard. Discipline included yelling, nonphysical punishment, physical punishment, and denying permission. Disparagement/disregard included sibling favoritism, broken promises, disrespect, teasing, criticism or name-calling, and distancing or rebuff. These findings identified some common hurtful parental factors to children, which is also consistent with the literature that some of these parenting behaviors are related to children's maladjustment (Bates & Pettit, 2007). Following Mills et al.'s work, McLaren and Sillars (2014) identified similar types of hurtful events that adolescents perceived from their parents. Discipline included

yelling, non-physical punishment, and boundary setting (e.g., refusing to let the offspring do an activity). Disparagement/disregard included sibling favoritism, broken promise, disrespect, teasing, criticism, name-calling, active disassociation (e.g., explicit rejection), and passive disassociations (e.g., being ignored). These results suggest that the factors that children and adolescents define as hurtful are largely similar and commonly experienced as signs of rejection and coercive control.

Brann et al. (2007) utilized the term "parents' betrayal" to study adult children's hurtful experiences with parents, which is defined as a perceived violation of clearly implicated norms of the specific relationship (Finkel et al., 2002). Participants were between the ages of 18 and 64, and they described parents' betrayals, including lying, broken promises, non-supportive behaviors, emotional or physical abuse, violations of privacy, favoring other family members, a change in treatment, revealing secrets, extramarital affairs, and money issues. Lee and Enright (2009) also focused on adults, with all the participants being male adults with ages ranging from 27 to 49, and they reported unfair treatment that they did not deserve and caused deep hurt from original family members (including parents and other relatives). The types of unfair treatment included physical abuse, sexual abuse, verbal abuse, emotional abuse, neglect, parental suicide, harsh corporal or emotional punishment, parental divorce, parents' favoritism of one child over another, parents' anger and aggression, unreasonably high expectations and demands, parents' alcohol and substance abuse, and fighting and arguments.

Taken together, first, these results have shown that rejections (such as yelling, disrespect, and ignoring) on the negative end of the responsiveness parenting dimension can cause hurt feelings. According to PARTheory, offspring can experience parental rejection from four principal expression (Khaleque & Rohner, 2002; Rohner, 1986; Rohner & Khaleque, 2010): (1)

emotional coldness, the opposite of being warm and affectionate by the absence or withdrawal of emotionally expressed affection; (2) hostility and aggression, including hurtful verbal and physical behaviors toward offspring that express hostility, anger, or resentment; (3) indifference[1], including the lack of concerns for offspring's physical, psychological, emotional, and social needs; (4) undifferentiated rejection, which refers to despite lack of obvious behavioral markers that the parents are unaffectionate, aggressive, neglectful, or rejecting in other ways, offspring could have subjective beliefs that their parents do not really care about or love them.

Second, coercive expressions of power (such as limiting and unreasonably high demands) are also a common cause of hurt feelings, which is the negative aspect of the parental controlling dimension. Specifically, according to theoretical perspectives of SDT, parental overcontrolling behaviors and psychological control are linked to offspring's maladjustment through the frustrating basic needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. For instance, overcontrolling parents force offspring to think, behave, or feel in particular ways that limit the autonomy that offspring may develop less autonomous regulation of themselves and harsh self-criticism (Soenens et al., 2005). Parents with high levels of psychological control would use manipulative techniques such as shaming, guilt-induction, and contingent love, which could lead to insecurities about their competence and impaired sense of closeness (Soenens & Vansteenkiste, 2010).

Third, there are other forms of parental factors that can cause hurt feelings. For example, sibling favoritism is a common cause of hurt feelings, as children often judge their importance and value by comparing their relationship with other family members, typically their siblings

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[1] IPARTheory often describes "indifference and neglect" as the third form of parental rejection. However, to differentiate this term from "neglect" in the context of childhood maltreatment, the present study only used the term "indifference," referring to the third form of rejection.

(Vangelisti, 2009). Parental divorce, as mentioned in Lee and Enright (2009), is not a direct parental behavior toward children but may be an event that indirectly elicits hurtful feelings. Although divorce is not inevitably perceived as hurtful, hurt feelings can arise from the feeling of abandonment and lack of communication from parents, whereas forgiveness intervention can improve hope and decrease trait anxiety for adolescents who have experienced parental divorce. (Freedman & Knupp, 2003). Parents' alcohol and substance abuse, also mentioned in Lee and Enright (2009), can be hurtful to offspring by eliciting feelings of shame and premature assumption of caring and protective roles by the offspring (Hill et al., 1996). These study results suggest that parenting behaviors directly involving offspring are hurtful, and other indirect interactions can also contain hurtful messages, requiring the effort to forgive.

Fourth, the previously mentioned rejection and controlling parenting that does not balance responsiveness with demandingness are generally poor childrearing methods but still can fall under the normative parenting (Martinez-Escudero et al., 2020). In contrast, parents' emotional abusive or neglectful childrearing methods are treated as non-normative parenting, which is part of child maltreatment and qualitatively more extreme and potentially more harmful than poor parenting (Wolfe & McIsaac, 2011). Therefore, it is important to distinguish child maltreatment from poor parenting practices to fully comprehend the nature of hurtful parental factors, as well as to understand the function of forgiveness toward parents. According to the World Health Organization (2022), child maltreatment is the abuse and neglect that occurs to children under 18 years of age, which mainly includes physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, and emotional abuse/psychological maltreatment. The more detailed definition and adverse effects of offspring maltreatment will be explored in a subsequent section titled "The Context of Offspring Maltreatment Histories".

The Role of Forgiveness toward Parents

Forgiveness is associated with positive emotions, such as empathy and compassion, that may override negative emotions (Kwok et al., 2017; Worthington Jr & Wade, 1999). Forgiveness also requires awareness of and managing personal emotions (Rizkalla et al., 2008). Accordingly, with higher levels of forgiveness toward parents, offspring may relieve negative emotions caused by past hurtful parent-offspring interactions and gain better emotional management skills. Indeed, forgiveness toward parents has been shown to help offspring resolve anger with their parents resulting from past hurts inflicted by parents, preventing the displacement of anger onto others (Lee & Enright, 2009). Maio et al. (2008) also revealed that young adolescents with higher levels of tendency to forgive parents exhibited less trait anxiety and depression, more emotional stability, and agreeableness one year later. These results suggested that forgiveness toward parents improves emotional regulation, subsequently reducing the risk of internalizing problems. Although previous studies found that parent-child relationship and parenting behaviors could predict children or adolescent's development of forgiveness (Christensen et al., 2011; Denham et al., 2005; Wright et al., 2017), it has been argued that forgiveness toward parents may be based more on personal choice when offspring establish their independence during adulthood than during childhood and adolescence (Brann et al., 2007). Therefore, forgiveness can be a generally protective factor of offspring's internalizing symptoms during emerging adulthood.

Moreover, given that parenting was found to account for only a small amount of the variance in child anxiety and depression (4% and 8%, respectively) (McLeod, Weisz, et al., 2007), and considering child characteristics could help explain the variations in effect sizes between parenting and offspring internalizing symptoms (McLeod, Wood, et al., 2007; Slagt et al., 2016), it is important to explore whether forgiveness toward parents may be a offspring

characteristic that might interact with current parenting behaviors to predict internalizing symptoms. However, the moderating role of forgiveness in the relation between parenting and offspring mental health is rarely examined. Some researchers find that preschoolers' dispositional forgiveness did not moderate the effect of parental aggression on preschoolers' anxiety symptoms (Kwok et al., 2017), and only individuals' tendencies to forgive themselves (not the tendencies to forgive others) moderated the association between insecure attachment and depression among college students (Liao & Wei, 2015). Nevertheless, little is known about the role of forgiveness toward parents rather than dispositional forgiveness. Hence, the moderating roles of forgiveness toward parents in the relationship between parenting and offspring's internalizing problems need further exploration.

First, forgiveness toward parents may serve as a protective factor for emerging adults, potentially reducing internalizing symptoms through additive effects of high parental warmth and low overparenting. If forgiveness interacts with parental warmth, one possible pattern is that forgiveness may enhance the effects of current parental warmth on the offspring's well-being. High levels of forgiveness toward parents and high levels of warm parenting behaviors may contribute to a more positive family context, which is associated with less risk of developing mental problems (Odgers et al., 2012; Sanders et al., 2014). Additionally, the stress-vulnerability model points out that a positive outcome of a psychiatric disorder is more likely if environmental stress is minimized or managed well (Sun et al., 2022). Therefore, it is also possible that only under less stressful environments in which the overparenting level is low, the higher levels of forgiveness can result in lower levels of internalizing symptoms.

Second, forgiveness toward parents may protect offspring by buffering against the negative impact of low parental warmth and high overparenting. Negative parenting has been

found to exert stronger or weaker effects on emerging adult outcomes for some offspring than for others (Schwartz, 2016). Indeed, when dealing with anger from injustice, such as unfair treatment from parents, forgiveness is one of the options (Fitzgibbons, 1998). The lower level of parental warmth is a risk factor for internalizing symptoms (Hipwell et al., 2008); those with higher levels of forgiveness may protect the offspring against low parental warmth via a potential increase in positive emotions. Moreover, offspring who forgave parents may avoid potentially destructive conflict following a parental transgression and prevent the detrimental effects on the offspring's well-being of subsequent conflict (Paleari et al., 2003), suggesting that higher levels of forgiveness may protect children from high levels of overparenting.

By contrast, the unforgiveness of others was found to be associated with higher depression scores among college students (Maltby et al., 2001). Therefore, low levels of forgiveness can be a risk factor for emerging adults. According to the cumulative risk model, children experiencing multiple individual or environmental risk factors were more likely to have psychopathological symptoms (Evans et al., 2013); the combination of lower levels of forgiveness and low parental warmth or high levels of overparenting may create cumulative risks, leading to more internalizing symptoms among emerging adults compared to those who experience negative parenting but have higher levels of forgiveness. More studies are needed to further explore the protective effects of forgiveness and examine whether low levels of forgiveness toward parents have detrimental effects on offspring's well-being.

Gender-Specific Pathways

Regarding parenting behaviors, parents may exert different influences on the offspring's internalizing problems depending on parental gender and offspring gender. For instance, studies have suggested that mothers and fathers may play distinct roles in the family, in which the

mother is more present and more responsive to the child's needs, whereas fathers tend to be more detached but more protective (Pakaluk & Price, 2020). The different roles of mothers and fathers may be because the mother has traditionally been the main caregiver, with the father as a provider and disciplinarian (Hosley & Montemayor, 1997). The distinct gender role expectation may also drive mothers and fathers to adopt distinct gender-based socialization attitudes toward their offspring (Dufur et al., 2010), which has been supported that sons and daughters may experience different parenting (Steele & McKinney, 2019). Although the extant literature about gender-specific pathways between parenting and offspring outcome has focused mainly on childhood or adolescence, it has been found that mothers and fathers use different parenting styles for sons and daughters during emerging adulthood (McKinney & Renk, 2008a). This finding further suggests the importance of examining the influences of parenting on emerging adult children in distinct parent-offspring dyads.

Specifically, the influences of parental warmth could be different among different parent-offspring dyads during emerging adulthood. One study found paternal warmth was one of the strongest protective factors against depression symptoms for male adolescents (Smojver-Ažić & Bezinović, 2011). Additionally, low parental warmth in adolescence, which was reported mostly by mothers, has been found to predict depression symptoms in merging adulthood for daughters, but not for sons (Lloyd et al., 2017). It is possible that warmth from the same-gender parent may be more important—however, Ali et al. (2015) found that adults' perceived maternal acceptance in childhood has stronger predictive effects on psychological adjustments of male adults than that of female adults, whereas paternal acceptance was more closely related to female adults' psychological adjustment than male adults. The inconsistent findings underscore the importance of considering mother-son, mother-daughter, father-son, and father-daughter dyads when

examining the influences of current parental warmth on internalizing symptoms during emerging adulthood.

The link between overparenting and emerging adults' internalizing symptoms also may vary by parental and offspring's gender. Rousseau and Scharf (2015) found that although mothers used more overparenting than fathers, higher levels of paternal overparenting were associated with more distress in emerging adults. Nevertheless, Padilla-Walker et al. (2021) found that fathers with high overparenting and high warmth tend to have emerging adult children with the lowest levels of depression symptoms. Similarly, Smorti et al., (2022) found that when controlling for the effect of other parenting behaviors, such as paternal care, paternal overprotection predicted higher life satisfaction among emerging adults. These results highlight that paternal overparenting behaviors may have a unique contribution to offspring's psychological well-being, which could be perceived as a form of care if considering the effects of paternal warmth at the same time. Moreover, the effects of overparenting might be a function of the offspring's gender. Female emerging adults were found to perceive higher levels of parental warmth and less control than male emerging adults. It is possible that male offspring may have a higher demand for autonomy and tend to perceive family closeness as intrusive (Saraiva & Matos, 2012). Therefore, men may feel more controlled by parents, which may lead to more internalizing symptoms.

Considering gender differences in forgiveness may also help to improve understanding of the pathways linking parenting and internalizing symptoms. There have been inconsistent findings regarding gender differences in forgiveness. For instance, some studies suggest no gender differences in the forgiveness (Berry et al., 2001; Maltby et al., 2007; Subkoviak et al., 1995). However, Miller et al.'s (2008) meta-analysis indicated that women tend to be more

forgiving than men. Kaleta and Mróz (2018) also found that men tend to have a higher motivation to seek retribution than women in the context of forgiveness in real-life situations. The gender differences in forgiveness also may differentially predict women's and men's internalizing symptoms. Toussaint et al. (2008) found that adult women's tendencies to forgive others were associated with decreased odds of major depressive episodes. In contrast, men's forgiveness of others was not associated with decreased odds of depression, suggesting that the interpersonal nature of forgiveness toward others may hold greater influence on women, with women showing more interpersonal depressive styles (Whiffen & Sasseville, 1991).

In addition to the possible gender differences in forgiveness tendency, it should be noted that forgiveness in the family may also depend on parental gender. For example, previous research indicated that adolescents have different motivations for forgiving each parent (Hoyt et al., 2005). Christensen et al. (2011) also suggested that adolescents' forgiveness toward mothers may depend more on the mother-offspring relationship, but forgiveness toward fathers may be more related to personal social-cognitive skills. Moreover, the interaction effects between forgiveness toward parents and parenting behaviors may depend on the parental's gender. Zhang et al. (2023) found that adult children who experienced more positive paternal parenting and had high levels of forgiveness toward the father had fewer externalizing symptoms, whereas no interaction effects were found between forgiveness toward the mother and maternal parenting. Overall, of the limited available data reporting forgiveness toward parents, forgiveness toward mother and father is likely to have differential associations with emerging adults' internalizing symptoms. Nevertheless, previous studies rarely considered the offspring's gender, and further research is needed to examine whether there are dyadic differences in forgiveness and how

forgiveness toward mother and father is related to the mechanisms underlying parenting and internalizing symptoms.

The Context of Offspring Maltreatment Histories

Child maltreatment has been treated as a dichotomous yes or no variable (English et al., 2005; Herrenkohl, 2005). This classification may stem from its profound and pervasive impact on various psychosocial domains of children's development, which have significant implications for the mechanisms linking parenting and internalizing problems during emerging adulthood. Nelson et al.'s (2017) recent meta-analysis indicated that 45.59% of adults with depression reported a history of child maltreatment. Those with maltreatment histories were also 2.66 to 3.73 times more likely to develop depression disorder in adulthood. Additionally, the adults with maltreatment histories showed earlier onset of depression, with a mean age of 23 years at first depression onset, compared to adults without maltreatment histories, with a mean age of 27.1. The results suggest that child maltreatment histories are closely related to depression and increase the risks of earlier onset of depression among emerging adults. Moreover, Wang et al. (2023) found that despite some individuals with maltreatment histories having low depression from adolescence to young adulthood, they reported lower satisfaction with romantic relationships, increased alcohol abuse/dependency, and poorer general physical health compared to their counterparts without maltreatment histories. These findings suggest that child maltreatment impacts internalizing symptoms, but its long-term effects can also extend beyond internalizing symptoms, emphasizing that research needs to consider the overarching context of child maltreatment histories in emerging adulthood.

Several theories can explain why child maltreatment can have long-lasting and widespread negative effects on adults. Attachment theory suggests that the experience of

maltreatment may affect children's internal working models and subsequently the relationships with others (Finzi et al., 2001; Lamb et al., 1985). Specifically, as the maltreating caregivers created a pervasive paradox that caregivers should be the source of comfort but expressed unpredictable abusive behaviors, maltreatment can cause insecure/disorganized attachment, which represents the absence of organized strategies to deal with stress (Baer & Martinez, 2006). The absence of effective coping strategies may contribute to earlier onset depression, especially during emerging adulthood, a critical developmental stage characterized by significant life transitions and identity challenges. Relatedly, individuals who experienced child maltreatment from attachment figures may perceive themselves as rejected. According to the PARThoery, as children grow into adulthood, the rejected individuals are more likely to develop negative worldviews that people and the world in general are unfriendly, hostile, or dangerous, leading to broad negative effects on psychological adjustment and behavioral functioning throughout the lifespan (Khaleque & Rohner, 2002; Rohner, 1986), which could explain that child maltreatment can lead to impaired psychosocial development in various domains, including interpersonal interactions.

It has been widely acknowledged that exposure to child maltreatment puts individuals at higher risk for poor developmental outcomes during emerging adulthood (for a review, see McMahon, 2014). Although the majority of maltreatment research focuses on children and adolescents typically involving individuals under 18 years old, recent studies have extended these concerns to emerging adults over 18 who remain somewhat dependent on their parents. These studies reveal that physical and psychological maltreatment continues into this later stage. For instance, Pollard and McKinney (2016) reported that nearly 20% of emerging adult males and 17% of females have been hit with an object by their fathers over the past year. Additionally,

McKinney et al. (2020) found that among college students who are emerging adults, approximately 75% reported experiencing psychological aggression, 25% reported experiencing severe physical assault, and 10% reported very severe physical assault, all of which were associated with worse psychological outcomes. Therefore, the context of maltreatment histories should consider not only child maltreatment but also extend to include the maltreatment of offspring during emerging adulthood.

One possible explanation to explain the link between maltreatment and internalizing problem according to the PARTtheory, is that emerging adults with maltreatment histories may perceive the current parenting in more negative perspectives because of the negative worldviews, leading to more internalizing symptoms. Nevertheless, research has indicated that not all children with maltreatment develop negative outcomes, and high-quality caregiving can serve as a protective factor (Meng et al., 2018). For instance, emerging adults with child maltreatment histories would benefit from more positive parenting characterized by high acceptance and low psychological control against PTSD symptoms (Sullivan et al., 2023). Therefore, positive parenting during emerging adulthood could be a particularly valuable resource to buffer against internalizing symptoms.

However, research on maltreated emerging adults regarding protective factors is lacking, and forgiveness could be another protective factor that substantially benefits those offspring at high risk. For instance, Taylor (2020) found that adult children's forgiveness toward the people who hurt them the most predicted lower levels of internalizing symptoms even after controlling for child maltreatment. It might be explained by the fact that forgiveness arises as a result of cognitive processes (Enright & Fitzgibbons, 2000), which is related to a higher internal locus of control (Camadan & Sari, 2021). Individuals with high levels of internal control tend to believe

that their own actions influence their life outcomes, and the increased controllability of life contributes to fewer internalizing problems in maltreated children (Bolger & Patterson, 2001). Therefore, forgiveness can be more significant for maltreated emerging adults, fostering more internal control and enhancing emotion regulation, protecting them from past trauma, thereby reducing internalizing symptoms.

The context of maltreatment histories should also be embedded in the gender-specific pathways between parenting and internalizing symptoms. Although the gender differences in the effects of child maltreatment on internalizing disorders in adulthood are inconclusive, it has been shown that maltreated women tend to have an increased vulnerability to depression and anxiety compared to maltreated men (Gallo et al., 2018). One possible reason is that women are more likely to have a victimization tendency, leading to more blame for themselves for stressful life events, such as maltreatment, thereby increasing the vulnerability of low self-esteem related to internalizing symptoms (Cutler & Nolen-Hoeksema, 1991). These results highlight the importance of examining gender differences in maltreated individuals to benefit from tailoring interventions, considering the potential unique pathways between parenting and internalizing symptoms.

Current Study

Given the limited scope of the literature to date, plausible interaction effects between current parenting and offspring internalizing symptoms via forgiveness toward parents during emerging adulthood are necessarily speculative. In order to explore the underlying mechanisms, the purposes of the current study are to deepen understanding of forgiveness in parent-offspring relationships and its potential protective effect in gender-specific pathways linking parenting and internalizing symptoms among emerging adults with and without maltreatment histories.

First, the current study investigated the parental factors perceived as hurtful by emerging adults for which offspring might need to extend forgiveness. This study coded whether the emerging adults were hurt unfairly by parents before and further coded the types of hurtful parental factors based on four basic categories of hurtful parental factors, including parenting behaviors that represent rejection, controlling parenting behaviors, interactions or events beyond just parental behaviors toward offspring, and non-normative parenting (i.e., suspected offspring maltreatment). The hurtful parental factors were reported separately for mothers and fathers by emerging adults, which also could provide a nuanced understanding of the gender differences in these factors among parents.

Second, the present study examined the specific effects of current parenting behaviors on emerging adult's internalizing symptoms. Given the importance of parenting behaviors to balance the needs of support and autonomy during emerging adulthood, the current study focused on parental warmth (being responsive and supportive to offspring's feelings or needs) reflecting parenting behaviors in the dimension of responsiveness and overparenting (overinvolvement and excessive control) reflecting dimension of demandingness. Importantly, most research on parenting and offspring outcomes in emerging adulthood has relied solely on offspring reports (i.e., Inguglia et al., 2016; Williams & Ciarrochi, 2020), which may not only bias the results by shared method variance (Lorenz et al., 1991), but also may bias the results by single sources of information (Podsakoff et al., 2012). Therefore, the current study also incorporated parents' perspectives on their parenting behaviors, providing additional evidence.

Third, this study explored whether forgiveness toward parents might moderate the path between parenting and offspring internalizing symptoms. It was hypothesized that the association between parenting behaviors and offspring internalizing symptoms may vary depending on the

forgiveness toward parents. It was expected that high levels of forgiveness could enhance the positive effect of high parental warmth and low overparenting and that high levels of forgiveness may protect the offspring against the negative impacts of low parental warmth and high overparenting. However, given the exploratory nature, we cannot exclude the possibility that lower levels of forgiveness combined with low parental warmth or high overparenting may create cumulative risks, leading to more internalizing symptoms.

Fourth, this study examined how current parenting and forgiveness might predict internalizing symptoms, considering gender-specific pathways and the overarching impact of maltreatment histories. Hence, regression models were tested separately across four parent-offspring dyads (mother-son, mother-daughter, father-son, and father-daughter dyads) to evaluate differences for emerging adults with and without perceived parental maltreatment. The current study did not have specific hypotheses, but exploring all possibilities that may account for variabilities in the manifestation of internalizing symptoms among emerging adults is important. This exploratory approach allows for the identification of nuanced patterns of how parental behaviors and forgiveness interact with individual differences embedded in gender and maltreatment experiences, enriching the understanding of the factors influencing mental health outcomes in emerging adulthood. Moreover, to mitigate reporting bias, in which emerging adults with more internalizing problems may perceive current parenting more negatively, exhibit lower levels of forgiveness, or report experiencing parental maltreatment, the current study proposed utilizing a longitudinal design. This approach aimed to provide stronger evidence for the directional relationship between parenting and forgiveness in predicting internalizing symptoms.

Methods

Participants

This study collected two waves of data. In Wave 1, 834 emerging adults participated, with age ranges from 18 to 29 years ($M = 20.73$, $SD = 2.84$), 57.8% female, 41.7% male, and 0.5% identified as other gender, such as nonbinary. Two hundred and twenty emerging adults (26.4%) reported perceived maltreatment from parents, and 614 emerging adults (73.6%) did not report maltreatment histories. Table 1 presents the sociodemographic information of emerging adult participants with or without maltreatment histories at baseline.

In Wave 2, 54 emerging adults completed the follow-up survey, aged 18 to 29 years ($M = 20.33$, $SD = 2.67$), 75.9% female, 18.5% male, and 5.6% identified as other gender, such as nonbinary. In Wave 2, 23 emerging adults reported perceived parental maltreatment. Of these, 18 (78.2%) had also reported perceived maltreatment in Wave 1. Conversely, 31 emerging adults reported no maltreatment history in Wave 2, and among these, 28 (90.3%) reported no maltreatment in Wave 1. Table 2 presents the sociodemographic information of emerging adult participants with or without maltreatment histories in the Wave 2 follow-up survey.

Parents also participated in Wave 1. A total of 65 parents participated, including 32 biological fathers, 31 biological mothers, one adoptive mother, and one step father. The majority of parents were White (76.9%), others identified as Black/African American (3.1%), Latino/Hispanic (3.1%), Asian (4.6%), mixed/biracial (9.2%), and other (e.g., multiracial) (3.1%). Most parents had at least a Bachelor's degree (67.7%) and were married, living with a spouse (92.3%). Overall, 61 emerging adults (47.5% female, 52.5% male) had at least one of their parents participate, with four emerging adults having both parents participate. Of these emerging adults aged ranging from 18-29 years ($M = 22.54$, $SD = 3.2$), of them 32 reported

maltreatment history, and 29 reported no maltreatment history. The sociodemographic

information of emerging adult participants who had parents participate can be seen in Table 3.

Table 1

Sociodemographic Characteristics of Emerging Adults in Wave 1

	With Maltreatment[a]				Without Maltreatment[b]				Full Sample			
	n	%	*M*	*SD*	*n*	%	*M*	*SD*	*n*	%	*M*	*SD*
Age			21.44	2.96			20.48	2.76			20.73	2.84
Gender												
Female	133	60.5			349	56.8			482	51.8		
Male	84	38.2			264	43.0			348	41.7		
Other	3	1.4			1	0.2			4	0.5		
Race/Ethnicity												
White	140	63.6			436	71			576	69.1		
Black/African American	15	6.8			27	4.4			42	5.0		
Latino/Hispanic	19	8.6			45	7.3			64	7.7		
Asian	24	10.9			59	9.6			83	10.0		
American Indian/Alaska Native	3	1.4			12	2			15	1.8		
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	6	2.7			3	0.5			9	1.1		
Mixed/Biracial	10	4.5			27	4.4			37	4.4		
Other	3	1.4			5	0.8			8	1.0		
Highest educational level												
Less than high school	9	4.1			6	1.0			15	1.8		
High school diploma/GED	34	15.5			68	11.1			102	12.2		
Some college, not currently enrolled	13	5.9			12	2.0			25	3.0		
Some college, currently enrolled	117	53.2			426	69.4			543	65.1		
Bachelor's degree	38	17.3			91	14.8			129	15.5		
Graduate or professional degree, not completed	6	2.7			7	1.1			13	1.6		
Graduate or professional degree, completed	3	1.4			4	0.7			7	0.8		
Marital status												
Single	143	65.0			416	67.8			559	67.0		
Committed relationship, not cohabitating	43	19.5			121	19.7			164	19.7		
Committed relationship, cohabitating	20	9.1			18	2.9			38	4.6		
Married	12	5.5			58	9.4			70	8.4		
Other	2	0.9			1	0.2			3	0.4		
Living arrangement												
In the family home	90	40.9			160	26.1			250	30.0		
Independent, with partner/children	22	10.0			44	7.2			66	7.9		
Independent, with roommate(s)	82	37.3			376	61.2			458	54.9		

	With Maltreatment[a]				Without Maltreatment[b]				Full Sample			
	n	%	*M*	*SD*	*n*	%	*M*	*SD*	*n*	%	*M*	*SD*
Independent, alone	26	11.8			34	5.5			60	7.2		
Annual household income												
Less than $25,000	65	29.5			179	29.2			244	29.3		
$25,000 to $34,999	24	10.9			38	6.2			62	7.4		
$35,000 to $49,999	24	10.9			34	5.5			58	7.0		
$50,000 to $74,999	36	16.4			92	15.0			128	15.3		
$75,000 to $99,999	17	7.7			46	7.5			63	7.6		
100,000 to 149,999	22	10.0			74	12.1			96	11.5		
150,000 to $199,999	11	5.0			37	6.0			48	5.8		
200,000 or more	20	9.1			109	17.8			129	15.5		
Current Situation												
Full-time student	152	69.1			480	78.2			632	75.8		
Part-time student	24	10.9			14	2.3			38	4.6		
Employed	33	15.0			100	16.3			133	15.9		
Unemployed	10	4.5			15	2.4			25	3.0		
Other	1	0.5			5	0.8			6	0.7		
Social Desirability			62.93	9.87			68.00	11.39			66.67	11.23

Note. [a]n = 220, [b]n = 614.

Table 2

Sociodemographic Characteristics of Emerging Adults in Wave 2

	With Maltreatment[a]				Without Maltreatment[b]				Full Sample			
	n	%	*M*	*SD*	*n*	%	*M*	*SD*	*n*	%	*M*	*SD*
Age			20.87	2.94			19.94	2.42			20.33	2.67
Gender												
Female	16	69.6			25	80.6			41	75.9		
Male	5	21.7			5	16.1			10	18.5		
Other	2	8.7			1	3.2			3	5.6		
Race/Ethnicity												
White	19	82.6			21	67.7			40	74.1		
Black/African American	2	8.7			0	0.0			2	3.7		
Latino/Hispanic	0	0.0			4	12.9			4	7.4		
Asian	1	4.3			2	6.5			3	5.6		
Mixed/Biracial	0	0.0			4	12.9			4	7.4		
Other	1	4.3			0	0.0			1	1.9		
Highest educational level												
Some college, not currently enrolled	2	8.7			0	0.00			2	3.7		
Some college, currently enrolled	17	73.9			30	96.8			47	87.0		
Bachelor's degree	3	13.0			1	3.2			4	7.4		
Graduate or professional degree, not completed	1	4.3			0	0.0			1	1.9		
Marital status												
Single	15	65.2			27	87.1			42	77.8		
Committed relationship, not cohabitating	3	13.0			4	12.9			7	13.0		
Committed relationship, cohabitating	1	4.3			0	0.0			1	1.9		
Married	3	13.0			0	0.0			3	5.6		
Living arrangement												
In the family home	8	34.8			3	9.7			11	20.4		
Independent, with partner/children	2	8.7			0	0.0			2	3.7		
Independent, with roommate(s)	11	47.8			27	87.1			38	70.4		
Independent, alone	2	8.7			1	3.2			3	5.6		
Annual household income												
Less than $25,000	7	30.4			11	35.5			18	33.3		
$25,000 to $34,999	4	17.4			2	6.5			6	11.1		
$35,000 to $49,999	7	30.4			3	9.7			10	18.5		
$50,000 to $74,999	1	4.3			4	12.9			5	9.3		

	With Maltreatment[a]				Without Maltreatment[b]				Full Sample			
	n	%	M	SD	n	%	M	SD	n	%	M	SD
$75,000 to $99,999	0	0.0			2	6.5			2	3.7		
100,000 to 149,999	1	4.3			3	9.7			4	7.4		
150,000 to $199,999	2	8.7			2	6.5			4	7.4		
200,000 or more	1	4.3			4	12.9			5	9.3		
Current Situation												
Full-time student	19	82.6			28	90.3			47	87		
Part-time student	1	4.3			1	3.2			2	3.7		
Employed	1	4.3			1	3.2			2	3.7		
Unemployed	1	4.3			0	0.0			1	1.9		
Other	0	0.0			1	3.2			1	1.9		
Social Desirability			66.05	12.05			68.38	11.81			67.31	11.85

Note. [a]n = 23, [b]n = 31.

Table 3

Sociodemographic Characteristics of Emerging Adults in Wave 1 with Parental Participation

	With Maltreatment[a]				Without Maltreatment[b]				Full Sample			
	n	%	*M*	*SD*	*n*	%	*M*	*SD*	*n*	%	*M*	*SD*
Age			23.06	3.07			21.97	3.29			22.54	3.20
Gender												
Female	10	31.3			19	65.5			29	47.5		
Male	22	68.8			10	34.5			32	52.5		
Race/Ethnicity												
White	21	65.6			25	86.2			46	75.4		
Black/African American	2	6.3			1	3.4			3	4.9		
Latino/Hispanic	1	3.1			0	0.0			1	1.6		
Asian	3	9.4			0	0.0			3	4.9		
American Indian/Alaska Native	0	0.0			1	3.4			1	1.6		
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0	0.0			1	3.4			1	1.6		
Mixed/Biracial	5	15.6			1	3.4			6	9.8		
Highest educational level												
High school diploma/GED	8	25.0			2	6.9			10	16.4		
Some college, not currently enrolled	3	9.4			1	3.4			4	6.6		
Some college, currently enrolled	11	34.4			16	55.2			27	44.3		
Bachelor's degree	7	21.9			8	27.6			15	24.6		
Graduate or professional degree, not completed	1	3.1			1	3.4			2	3.3		
Graduate or professional degree, completed	2	6.3			1	3.4			3	4.9		
Marital status												
Single	25	78.1			21	72.4			46	75.4		
Committed relationship, not cohabitating	3	9.4			6	20.7			9	14.8		
Committed relationship, cohabitating	2	6.3			0	0.0			2	3.3		
Married	2	6.3			2	6.9			4	6.6		
Living arrangement												
In the family home	20	62.5			12	41.4			32	52.5		
Independent, with partner/children	2	6.3			3	10.3			5	8.2		
Independent, with roommate(s)	6	18.8			12	41.4			18	29.5		
Independent, alone	4	12.5			2	6.9			6	9.8		
Annual household income												
Less than $25,000	1	3.1			3	10.3			4	6.6		
$25,000 to $34,999	6	18.8			1	3.4			7	11.5		

	With Maltreatment[a]				Without Maltreatment[b]				Full Sample			
	n	%	M	SD	n	%	M	SD	n	%	M	SD
$35,000 to $49,999	7	21.9			4	13.8			11	18.0		
$50,000 to $74,999	5	15.6			8	27.6			13	21.3		
$75,000 to $99,999	6	18.8			6	20.7			12	19.7		
100,000 to 149,999	4	12.5			4	13.8			8	13.1		
150,000 to $199,999	1	3.1			0	0.0			1	1.6		
200,000 or more	2	6.3			2	6.9			4	6.6		
Current Situation												
Full-time student	12	37.5			15	51.7			27	44.3		
Part-time student	10	31.3			2	6.9			12	19.7		
Employed	7	21.9			11	37.9			18	29.5		
Unemployed	3	9.4			1	3.4			4	6.6		
Social Desirability			65.81	9.28			68.36	6.96			67.00	8.31

Note. [a]n = 32, [b]n = 29.

Procedures

In Wave 1 data collection, the study recruited emerging adults via the SONA system in a large midwestern university via which students can earn course credit. Participants were also recruited from Reddit and Craigslist platforms to increase diversity[2], via which participants could win a 15-dollar e-gift card after participation. Participants aged between 18 and 29 completed an online survey via the Qualtrics platform, reporting on personal internalizing symptoms, perceived parenting behaviors, and forgiveness toward parents. After participants completed the online survey, they were offered the option to send an invitation (via e-mail) to one of their parents or both parents to participate in this study. Parents who were invited completed a similar online survey via Qualtrics, including personal internalizing symptoms and parenting behaviors, and they were provided the opportunity to win a 15-dollar e-gift card as compensation. Wave 2 data collection was after six months; emerging adult participants who agreed to participate in a follow-up survey would be invited (via e-mail) to complete the questionnaire assessing their internalizing symptoms, perceived parenting behaviors, and forgiveness toward parents. All the emerging adult participants at Wave 2 had the chance to win a 15-dollar e-gift card after completing the questionnaire. The University Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved the present study.

Measures

Parental Warmth

Emerging adults completed a subscale of Warmth from the college-student version of the Perceptions of Parents Scales (POPS) (Robbins, 1994), which contains five items (i.e., "My

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[2] In the final sample of Wave 1, 64.87% of emerging adult participants were recruited from SONA system, and 35.13% were recruited from Reddit and Craigslist.

mother/father accepts me and likes me as I am"). See Appendix A. Items are rated on a 7-point Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 (*not at all true*) to 7 (*very true*). Scores range from 5 to 35, with a higher score reflecting a higher level of parental warmth. The scale has demonstrated good internal consistency and validity (Asghari & Besharat, 2011). In the current study, Cronbach's α = .89 for the mother and Cronbach's α = .87 for the father in the Wave 1 sample. Cronbach's α = .85 for the mother and Cronbach's α = .89 for the father in the Wave 2 sample.

Parent-report warmth was measured by the subscale of Warmth/Support from the modified version of the Parenting Styles and Dimensions Questionnaire (PSDQ) (Robinson et al., 1995). See Appendix B. The original questions were modified by Nelson et al. (2011) to assess dimensions of parenting during emerging adulthood, demonstrating good internal consistency for mother and father form. The Warmth/Support subscale contains five items (i.e., "I am responsive to our child's feelings or needs"). Items are rated on a 7-point scale, with responses ranging from 1 (*never*) to 7 (*always*). Scores range from 5 to 35, with a higher score reflecting a higher level of warmth. Cronbach's α = .88 in the parent sample.

Overparenting

The emerging adult version of the Overparenting of Emerging Adults Scale (OPEAS) (Sherman, 2015) was used to measure perceived overparenting. See Appendix C. The original scale contains 19 items, with four items specifically designed for emerging adults who are survivors of childhood cancer, which have been dropped in the current study, resulting in 15 items used in the current study (i.e., "Sometimes when I am doing a task, my mother/father will just take over"). Items are rated on a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*completely disagree*) to 7 (*completely agree*). Scores range from 15 to 105, with a higher score reflecting a higher level of overparenting. The emerging adult version of OPEAS has demonstrated good

internal consistency (Sherman, 2015). Cronbach's α = .90 for both mother and father in the

Wave 1 sample. Cronbach's α= .93 for the mother and Cronbach's α = .92 for the father in the

Wave 2 sample.

The parent version of the OPEAS was used to measure parent-report overparenting. See

Appendix D. The original scale also contains 19 items, but the current study would only use 15

items appropriate for the typical population (i.e., "Sometimes I have to take over tasks that my

child is doing improperly"). Items are rated on a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1

(*completely disagree*) to 7 (*completely agree*). Scores range from 15 to 105, with a higher score

reflecting a higher level of overparenting. The parent version of OPEAS has demonstrated

adequate internal consistency (Sherman, 2015). Cronbach's α = .91 in the parent sample.

Forgiveness toward Parents

The current study used the Enright Forgiveness Inventory-30 (EFI-30) (Enright et al.,

2021) to assess the degree to which people forgive their parents for an unfair and hurtful deed

inflicted on individuals. See Appendix E. Emerging adult participants were first asked to briefly

describe one hurtful maternal or paternal behavior separately via a maternal and paternal form.

After providing free responses to the open-ended question, they were instructed under the cover

story to "please answer a series of questions about your current attitude toward this person."

Subsequently, they completed 30 items with three subscales of EFI-30, which assess the

individual's current affect, cognition, and behavior toward the mother or father (e.g., "I feel warm

toward him"; "I do or would avoid him"; "I think he is horrible"). Therefore, even if the

participants do not have any hurtful experiences to disclose, they can still complete the EFI-30.

Items are rated on a 6-point Likert scale, where 1 = *strongly disagree*, and 6 = *strongly agree*.

Total scores ranged from 30 to 180, with higher scores reflecting higher levels of forgiveness or

more positive attitudes toward parents. This measure has demonstrated excellent concurrent validity and internal consistency across cultures (Enright et al., 2021). Cronbach's α = .98 for EFI-30 total score for both mother and father in Wave 1 sample. Cronbach's α = .98 for both mother and father in the Wave 2 sample.

Internalizing Symptoms

Emerging adults and their parents reported personal internalizing symptoms by Depression Anxiety Stress Scale-21 (DASS-21) (Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995). See Appendix F. The DASS-21 is a self-reported scale that comprises 21 items that measure the degree to which participants have experienced negative emotional symptoms over the past week regarding three dimensions: depression (i.e., "I felt that life was meaningless"); anxiety (i.e., "I was aware of dryness of my mouth"), and stress (i.e., "I felt I was rather touchy"). Items are rated on a 4-point Likert scale, where 0 = *did not apply to me at all*, and 3 = *applied to me very much, or most of the time.* Total scores range from 0 to 63, with a higher score indicating a higher level of internalizing symptoms. The DASS-21 has demonstrated high internal consistency reliability for adults of the general population (Henry & Crawford, 2005). Cronbach's α = .94 for emerging adults in the Wave 1 sample, Cronbach's α =.93 in the Wave 2 sample, and Cronbach's α = .93 in the parent sample.

Maltreatment Histories

Maltreatment histories were evaluated by inquiring about emerging adult participants' personal perceptions via the question, "Have you ever experienced any form of maltreatment or abuse by your parents, such as physical, emotional, or sexual abuse?". The answer of "yes" was interpreted as indicative of a history of parental maltreatment, and "no" suggested the absence of such a history.

Social Desirability

The Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding Short Form (BIDR-16) (Hart et al., 2015) was used to measure both emerging adults and parents' social desirability to control for the socially desirable response of over-reporting positive behavior or under-reporting negative behavior. See Appendix G. Sixteen items, such as *"*I never regret my decisions" and "I don't gossip about other people's business," are rated on a 7-point Likert scale, where 1 = *not true*, and 7 = *very true.* Total scores range from 16 to 112, with a higher score indicating higher socially desirable responses. BIDR-16 has demonstrated acceptable test-retest reliability and internal consistency for adults (Fitterman-Harris, 2019; Hart et al., 2015). Cronbach's α = .69 for emerging adults in the Wave 1 sample, Cronbach's α =.72 in the Wave 2 sample, and Cronbach's α = .81 in the parent sample.

Data Analysis Plan

Although the present study collected two waves of data and parental data, the small sample size of the follow-up survey and parental reports limited the ability to test complex models. Therefore, the main analysis only focused on the Wave 1 cross-sectional data to maximize the sample size. The secondary analysis focused on one subsample of participants who completed both waves of data collection and another subsample of participants who had both offspring reports and parent reports.

The main analysis included quantitative analysis of reported parental hurtful factors and quantitative regression models examining the mechanisms underlying parenting, forgiveness, and internalizing symptoms. The secondary analysis only included quantitative analysis to help explain the main analysis's results. The present study performed descriptive statistical tests in

IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 28), regression analyses in R 4.2.1 (R Core Team, 2022), and power analysis in G*Power (Faul et al., 2007).

Qualitative Coding of Hurtful Parental Factors

Emerging adults were first asked to recall a specific hurtful experience involving their mother or father via the prompt, "We ask you now to think of one experience of your mother/father hurting you unfairly and deeply. For a few moments, visualize in your mind the events of that interaction. Try to see the person and try to experience what happened". Then, they were asked to "Please briefly describe what happened when this person hurt you". There were no word or other limits on the participants' responses in the open-ended question. By allowing participants to freely respond without constraints, the present study aimed to capture a more genuine and comprehensive reflection of the participants' experiences and perceptions.

Responses were coded separately for maternal and paternal factors. First, the responses were categorized based on whether they indicated a hurtful experience, including "No," "Yes," and "Unknown." Specifically, "No" = if the participants explicitly expressed no hurtful experiences, such as "My mom/dad has never hurt me," "I can't think of anything that my mother/father hurt me," or "Not applicable." "Yes" = participants wrote anything regarding parental hurtful factors, which can be as short as "yelled at me." "Unknown" = participants did not respond to the open question clearly or indicated "I prefer not to say." Importantly, according to the definition of forgiveness, which is not denial or forgetting, answers such as "I don't want to say" or "I forgot" were also coded as "Unknown" because we cannot rule out the possibility that something hurtful happened that needs efforts to forgive.

Second, for the responses coded as "Yes," the type of hurtful factors was coded. Besides the text entries that were vague to evaluate the specific type (e.g., only describe the hurtful

feelings) would be coded as "did not specify," other hurtful factor can be grouped into four parts, including parenting behaviors indicating rejection, controlling parenting, hurtful events or interactions, and suspected offspring maltreatment. According to the PARTheory, rejection can be further divided into emotional coldness, hostility and aggression (physical and verbal), indifference, and undifferentiated rejection. Specifically, "emotional coldness" = the absence or withdrawal of affection or warmth (e.g., distancing or not talking to the offspring). "Physical punishment" = hurtful physical behaviors or discipline causing physical pain (e.g., spanking or hitting). "Verbal aggression" = hurtful verbal or symbolic behaviors causing psychological pain (e.g., yelling, criticizing, or insulting). "Indifference" = lack of concern for offspring's physical, psychological, emotional, educational, and social needs (e.g., invasion of privacy, failure to acknowledge achievements, or disrespect). "Undifferentiated rejection" = subjective beliefs of rejection despite lack of obvious behavioral markers (e.g., no specific event but a feeling of abandonment).

Controlling parenting was divided into two types based on the definitions of overparenting and psychological control. Therefore, "overcontrol" = overinvolved parenting behaviors interfering in offspring's lives (e.g., limiting or controlling offspring's personal choices or activities). "Psychological control" = intrusive and manipulative behaviors aimed at offspring's thoughts and feelings (e.g., guilt induction by setting unrealistic expectations or blaming for other's mistakes).

Other hurtful events or factors include hurtful parent-offspring interactions and events that may not directly target the offspring. Specifically, "favoritism" = a situation where other people are afforded preferential treatment, affection, or privileges (e.g., prioritizing the siblings or new partner). "Conflict" = harmful communication leading to emotional pain (e.g., arguments

and fights). "Indirect hurt" = parent's actions not directly targeting the offspring yet resulting in emotional pain (e.g., parental divorce or witnessing siblings/one of the parents experiencing hurts). "mental issue" = parental mental health issues that could cause challenges and distress to offspring (e.g., parental substance abuse or emotional problems). "absence" = situations where parents are physically unavailable but not as severe as intentional abandonment (e.g., moving out or going to jail).

The last part is suspected offspring maltreatment, which was divided into physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, and psychological maltreatment. Specifically, "physical abuse" = the deliberate application of force to the offspring's body, which can result in harm or endangerment, such as leaving marks, bruises, or injuries on children (Straus & Donnelly, 2017). The "physical abuse" was coded in the present study based on the severity to differentiate from "physical punishment", including more severe forms of physical aggression (e.g., choking) and more severe injuries (e.g., bruises or conditions that could be life-threatening). "sexual abuse" = any activity with a child before the age of legal consent that is for the sexual gratification of an adult or a substantially older child (Johnson, 2004). The "sexual abuse" was coded if there was any form of parental involvement in sexual harassment, it was recorded as sexual abuse. "neglect" = omission of caretaking behavior meeting a child's basic needs for healthy development (Mennen et al., 2010). To distinguish from "Indifference", the present study coded "neglect" based on the consequences that could be endangered (e.g., refusal to seek or delay in seeking health care) and the duration and frequency of the behaviors that could be a pattern or repeated deficits in child care (e.g., always being unavailable to the child). "Psychological maltreatment" = a repeated pattern of behaviors conveying that children are worthless, unloved, or seriously undermining children's development with physical/psychological violence (Hibbard

et al., 2012). Similarly, to distinguish from "verbal aggression", it was coded based on the potentially detrimental consequences and frequency/duration (e.g., harsh language that involved suicidal ideation or constant insulting).

Excluding responses coded as "did not specify," which also cannot be evaluated for severity, participants' hurtful experiences with their mothers and fathers would be coded for severity. Notably, although participants' hurtful experiences may contain multiple hurtful factors, each was separately coded. However, for the purpose of severity classification, only the highest level of severity reported would be assigned to each participant. The severity classification included mild, moderate, severe, and maltreatment, which was based on the frequency or duration, the potential impact, and the type of the factors. Specifically, "mild" = behaviors or events that only occurred once or rarely occurred, do not leave a significant negative impact on offspring's emotion or long-term well-being, and may belong to common parental discipline strategies. Examples can include discipline for violating the curfew or an argument for which the parents apologized later. "Moderate" = behaviors or events that occurred several times, or if it is just one-time event, but caused physical pain or psychological pain based on the participants' descriptions, and behaviors may belong to poor parenting. Examples can include yelling at the offspring sometimes or one-time unfair blaming that made the offspring very upset. "severe" = behaviors or events that occurred very frequently, or if not very frequently, still caused significant physical or psychological pain which negatively affected the offspring's life in the long term, and behaviors that have certain possibilities of being classified as non-normative parenting (i.e., maltreatment). Examples can include frequent yelling and being indifferent to offspring's needs to seek mental health service. "Maltreatment" = the hurtful experiences that have already been coded at least to have one suspected offspring maltreatment

(i.e., physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, psychological maltreatment). The suspected offspring maltreatment can put the offspring at risk of enduring long-term negative impacts on physical or psychological well-being.

Regression Models

Multiple linear regression models were employed to investigate the relationships between current parenting behaviors, emerging adults' forgiveness toward their parents, and internalizing symptoms of emerging adults. Initially, based on emerging adults' subjective experiences of parental maltreatment, the sample was divided into two subgroups: one with maltreatment histories and one without maltreatment histories. Furthermore, to explore the gender-specific pathways, the predictive effects of parental warmth, overparenting, and forgiveness toward parents were tested separately within mother-daughter, mother-sone, father-daughter, and father-son dyads. For instance, a mother-daughter dyad model would utilize maternal warmth, maternal overparenting, and female emerging adults' forgiveness toward their mothers as predictors of the female emerging adults' internalizing symptoms. Subsequently, to explore potential interactive effects between parenting and forgiveness, two interaction terms (warmth x forgiveness and overparenting x forgiveness) were introduced subsequently to the main effect model. In sum, main effect models only tested the direct effects of parenting and forgiveness on internalizing symptoms, but interaction effect models also tested the interactive effects between parenting and forgiveness. Furthermore, model comparisons, using F-tests to assess the significance of the increase in explained variance (ΔR^2), were conducted to determine whether the main effect or the interaction effect model was the best-fitting model. Therefore, eight main effect models and eight interaction effect models were tested across the mother-son, mother-daughter, father-son, and father-daughter dyads, for both subgroups with and without maltreatment histories. Given

the study's exploratory nature and the goal was to recruit as many participants as possible to ensure a diverse sample, a priori power analysis was not conducted. Nevertheless, post-hoc power analyses were performed to evaluate whether there was sufficient power to detect the main effect and interaction effects within each parent-offspring dyad.

Results

Main Analysis of Cross-sectional Data

Preliminary Analysis

Descriptive statistics and correlations among major study variables for the full Wave 1 sample can be seen in Table 4. Given the total scores of EFI-30 ranging from 30 to 180, the mean scores of EFI-30 (approximately 150) for mother and father show that emerging adults generally have higher levels of positive attitudes toward parents. The correlational results show that as parental warmth increases, emerging adults' internalizing symptoms decrease, whereas parental overparenting behaviors are negatively related to internalizing symptoms. The total and subscales scores of EFI-30 are negatively associated with internalizing symptoms, suggesting that the more positive attitudes (including affect, behavior, and cognition) toward parents, the fewer the internalizing symptoms. Similar patterns are also observed for groups of emerging adults with or without maltreatment histories (see Table 5).

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations for Study Variables for Full Sample in Wave 1

	n	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Maternal warmth	834	27.45	7.16	–												
2. Paternal warmth	830	27.01	6.98	.64**	–											
3. Maternal overparenting	833	55.53	17.61	-.39**	-.32**	–										
4. Paternal overparenting	829	50.09	17.87	-.39**	-.31**	.67**	–									
5. EFI-30_affect_M	833	48.40	11.32	.80**	.54**	-.48**	-.48**	–								
6. EFI-30_behavior_M	830	48.70	10.78	.79**	.51**	-.47**	-.50**	.90**	–							
7. EFI-30_cognition_M	827	50.24	10.82	.81**	.52**	-.47**	-.50**	.91**	.92**	–						
8. EFI-30_total_M	827	147.35	31.90	.83**	.54**	-.49**	-.51**	.97**	.97**	.97**	–					
9. EFI-30_affect_F	816	47.38	11.73	.53**	.76**	-.38**	-.41**	.64**	.59**	.61**	.63**	–				
10. EFI-30_behavior_F	818	48.57	11.41	.55**	.75**	-.38**	-.44**	.64**	.63**	.64**	.66**	.91**	–			
11. EFI-30_cognition_F	816	49.39	11.42	.57**	.74**	-.39**	-.45**	.66**	.63**	.68**	.68**	.89**	.92**	–		
12. EFI-30_total_F	814	145.44	33.45	.56**	.78**	-.39**	-.45**	.67**	.64**	.66**	.68**	.97**	.97**	.97**	–	
13. Internalizing symptoms	820	22.16	14.11	-.48**	-.47**	.36**	.39**	-.51**	-.50**	-.50**	-.52**	-.50**	-.51**	-.53**	-.53**	–

Note. EFI-30 = Enright Forgiveness Inventory-30, M = mother, F = father.

**p < .01.

Table 5

Correlations for Study Variables by Perceived Maltreatment Histories in Wave 1

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Maternal warmth	–	.72**	-.38**	-.40**	.76**	.75**	.78**	.79**	.57**	.61**	.63**	.62**	-.44**
2. Paternal warmth	.29**	–	-.33**	-.29**	.56**	.56**	.58**	.59**	.70**	.71**	.71**	.74**	-.42**
3. Maternal overparenting	-.18**	-.03	–	.70**	-.47**	-.46**	-.46**	-.48**	-.40**	-.39**	-.39**	-.40**	.33**
4. Paternal overparenting	-.09	-.07	.52**	–	-.47**	-.47**	-.50**	-.50**	-.41**	-.43**	-.45**	-.44**	.33**
5. EFI-30_affect_M	.75**	.23**	-.31**	-.29**	–	.88**	.89**	.96**	.71**	.71**	.71**	.74**	-.48**
6. EFI-30_behavior_M	.74**	.17*	-.31**	-.37**	.88**	–	.90**	.96**	.66**	.72**	.70**	.71**	-.47**
7. EFI-30_cognition_M	.75**	.16*	-.29**	-.31**	.89**	.92**	–	.97**	.71**	.75**	.78**	.77**	-.48**
8. EFI-30_total_M	.78**	.19**	-.31**	-.34**	.96**	.96**	.97**	–	.72**	.75**	.76**	.77**	-.49**
9. EFI-30_affect_F	.19**	.74**	-.11	-.18**	.32**	.27**	.25**	.29**	–	.89**	.88**	.96**	-.46**
10. EFI-30_behavior_F	.17*	.70**	-.13	-.24**	.31**	.29**	.27**	.30**	.90**	–	.91**	.97**	-.45**
11. EFI-30_cognition_F	.22**	.67**	-.18**	-.27**	.37**	.34**	.34**	.37**	.86**	.89**	–	.96**	-.48**
12. EFI-30_total_F	.20**	.73**	-.14*	-.24**	.35**	.31**	.30**	.33**	.96**	.97**	.95**	–	-.48**
13. Internalizing symptoms	-.27**	-.29**	.17*	.27**	-.31**	-.31**	-.30**	-.32**	-.35**	-.37**	-.40**	-.39**	–

Note. EFI-30 = Enright Forgiveness Inventory-30, M = mother, F = father. The results for the emerging adults with perceived maltreatment are shown below the diagonal. The results for the merging adults without perceived maltreatment are shown above the diagonal.

$^*p < .05.$ $^{**}p < .01.$

Table 6 presents the t-test results comparing the differences in major study variables between groups with and without maltreatment histories. Overall, emerging adults with maltreatment histories have lower levels of perceived warmth, higher levels of overparenting, less positive attitudes toward parents, and higher levels of internalizing symptoms than emerging adults without maltreatment histories. Notably, most major variables' effect sizes are large (Cohen's $d > 0.08$). Nevertheless, emerging adults who perceive parental maltreatment still have relatively positive scores toward parents (mean scores of EFI-30 total greater than 120 for both mother and father).

Table 6

Differences in Parenting, Forgiveness toward Parents, and Internalizing Symptoms for Emerging Adults with or without Perceive Parental Maltreatment in Wave 1

Variable	With		Without		t	df	p	Cohen's d
	M	SD	M	SD				
Maternal warmth	22.13	7.52	29.35	5.96	14.35	832	<.001	-1.13
Paternal warmth	22.49	7.20	28.63	6.14	12.12	828	<.001	-0.95
Maternal overparenting	64.10	18.37	52.46	16.28	8.78	831	<.001	0.69
Paternal overparenting	58.64	18.06	47.02	16.78	8.62	827	<.001	0.68
EFI-30_affect_M	40.70	11.90	51.15	9.74	12.83	831	<.001	-1.01
EFI-30_behavior_M	41.97	11.20	51.10	9.55	11.59	828	<.001	-0.91
EFI-30_cognition_M	43.17	11.71	52.78	9.26	12.25	825	<.001	-0.97
EFI-30_total_M	125.84	33.55	155.10	27.45	12.72	825	<.001	-1.00
EFI-30_affect_F	39.98	12.38	50.05	10.27	11.68	814	<.001	-0.93
EFI-30_behavior_F	41.23	12.09	51.21	9.91	11.95	816	<.001	-0.95

EFI-30_cognition_F	42.05	12.42	52.01	9.80	11.89	814	<.001	-0.95
EFI-30_total_F	123.28	35.50	153.40	28.82	12.33	812	<.001	-0.98
Internalizing symptoms	31.07	13.44	19.00	12.95	11.62	818	<.001	0.92

Note. EFI-30 = Enright Forgiveness Inventory-30, M = mother, F = father.

Qualitative Insights into Hurtful Parental Factors

Descriptive Statistics of Hurtful Parental Experiences. In Wave 1, regarding the hurtful experiences with the mother, 22.9% (n = 191) emerging adults do not report any hurtful experiences (coded as "no"), 71.9% (n = 600) participants report hurtful experiences (coded as "yes"), and 5.2% (n = 43) participants explicitly express unwillingness to answer, or their responses are too vague to code (coded as "unknown"). Regarding the hurtful experiences with the father, 24.6% (n =205) are coded as "no," 70.4% (n =587) are coded as "yes," and 5.0% (n = 42) are coded as "unknown". Among those participants who are coded as "yes" for hurtful maternal experiences, 37.7% (n = 226) are male offspring, and 61.7% (n = 370) are female offspring. Among those participants who are coded as "yes" for hurtful paternal experiences, 40.0% (n = 235) are male offspring, and 59.5% (n = 349) are female offspring. Except for the participants who did not specify the hurtful experiences that cannot be coded for severity, the severity of hurtful maternal and paternal experiences is reported as percentages of female and male offspring in Table 7 and Table 8. It can be seen that most hurtful and maternal experiences are moderately severe for both female and male emerging adults.

Table 7

Percentage of Various Severities of Hurtful Maternal Experiences in Wave 1

Severity of Maternal Factors	Female Offspring		Male Offspring		Total	
	n	Percent	n	Percent	n	Percent

	n	Percent	n	Percent	n	Percent
Mild	40	11.24	44	21.05	84	14.76
Moderate	226	63.48	131	62.68	359	63.09
Severe	74	20.79	28	13.40	104	18.28
Maltreatment	16	4.49	6	2.87	22	3.87
Total	356	100.00	209	100.00	569	100.00

Table 8

Percentage of Various Severities of Hurtful Paternal Experiences in Wave 1

Severity of Paternal Factors	Female Offspring		Male Offspring		Total	
	n	Percent	*n*	Percent	*n*	Percent
Mild	50	15.15	61	26.99	112	20.04
Moderate	198	60.00	125	55.31	325	58.14
Severe	67	20.30	37	16.37	104	18.60
Maltreatment	15	4.55	3	1.33	18	3.22
Total	330	100.00	226	100.00	559	100.00

For participants who are coded as "yes" for hurtful maternal or paternal experiences, their responses were further coded to specific hurtful maternal and paternal factors, including four basic aspects: rejection, controlling, events or interactions that directly or indirectly involved the offspring, and maltreatment. Table 9 and Table 10 present the frequencies of hurtful maternal and paternal factors, respectively. Importantly, some participants report hurtful experiences involving multiple factors. Therefore, the total counts of maternal and paternal factors exceed the number of participants who were hurt. For maternal and paternal factors, the most frequent type is verbal aggression. The second common type for mother is psychological control and for father is indifference. The patterns are largely consistent for female and male offspring, although more

female offspring (32.97% and 34.67% for mother and father, respectively) report experiences involving multiple hurtful experiences compared to male offspring (19.03% and 23.40% for mother and father, respectively).

Table 9

Frequencies of Maternal Factors Perceived as Hurtful via Female and Male Offspring in Wave 1

Maternal Factors	Female Offspring		Male Offspring		Total	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Emotional coldness	24	4.58	15	5.43	39	4.88
Physical punishment	18	3.44	14	5.07	32	4.00
Verbal aggression	116	22.14	70	25.36	186	23.25
Indifference	75	14.31	30	10.87	105	13.13
Undifferentiated rejection	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Overcontrol	72	13.74	44	15.94	116	14.50
Psychological control	101	19.27	32	11.59	133	16.63
Favoritism	26	4.96	12	4.35	38	4.75
Conflict	36	6.87	16	5.80	52	6.50
Indirect hurt	12	2.29	14	5.07	26	3.25
Mental issues	11	2.10	6	2.17	17	2.13
Absence	1	0.19	1	0.36	2	0.25
Physical abuse	2	0.38	0	0.00	2	0.25
Sexual abuse	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Neglect	8	1.53	3	1.09	11	1.38
Psychological maltreatment	8	1.53	3	1.09	11	1.38

Did not specify	14	2.67	16	5.80	30	3.75
Total	524	100.00	276	100.00	800	100.00

Table 10

Frequencies of Paternal Factors Perceived as Hurtful via Female and Male Offspring in Wave 1

Paternal Factors	Female Offspring		Male Offspring		Total	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Emotional coldness	37	7.60	17	5.82	54	6.93
Physical punishment	20	4.11	33	11.30	53	6.80
Verbal aggression	112	23.00	87	29.79	199	25.55
Indifference	90	18.48	52	17.81	142	18.23
Undifferentiated rejection	2	0.41	0	0.00	2	0.26
Overcontrol	30	6.16	21	7.19	51	6.55
Psychological control	50	10.27	30	10.27	80	10.27
Favoritism	25	5.13	6	2.05	31	3.98
Conflict	20	4.11	20	6.84	40	5.13
Indirect hurt	28	5.75	5	1.71	33	4.24
Mental issues	23	4.72	9	3.08	32	4.11
Absence	9	1.85	1	0.34	10	1.28
Physical abuse	5	1.03	0	0.00	5	0.64
Sexual abuse	1	0.21	0	0.00	1	0.13
Neglect	8	1.64	1	0.34	9	1.16
Psychological maltreatment	9	1.85	2	0.68	11	1.41
Did not specify	18	3.70	8	2.74	26	3.34

Total		487	100.00	292	100.00	779	100.00

The Domains of Hurtful Parental Factors. Overall, the types of hurtful parental factors for both female and male emerging adults can be categorized into four domains: parental rejection, parental controlling behaviors, events or interactions directly or indirectly involving the offspring, and offspring maltreatment. The specifics of these aspects are clarified below to improve the validity of the interpretations of hurtful parental factors.

Parental Rejection. In terms of parental rejection, verbal aggression is the most common hurtful factor for both mother and father that was reported by both female and male emerging adults. Here are some direct quotations of verbal aggression from mother and father separately reported by the participants: "She got upset when I did not listen to her and called me a bitch and that hurt"; "I backed into the garage door on accident and he proceeded to tell me how I am a bad driver and how all of the women in our household shouldn't have a license because all we do is hit things with our cars." It is evident that these messages contain intensely negative emotional content, which can be profoundly hurtful. Another commonly perceived parental rejection is indifference of offspring's needs, and a number of examples relate to indifference of offspring's emotional or psychological needs, such as "I confided in her with something, and she told someone that I didn't want to know, which broke my trust" and "My dad recently fell asleep and missed a big event that I needed him for." Although the negative emotions involved in these events are not as intense as in the "verbal aggression" experiences, offspring also interpreted these parenting behaviors as hurtful. Other forms of parental rejection, emotional coldness and physical punishment reported by offspring also demonstrate that parental rejection could arouse hurt feelings, supporting the conclusion that people have the inherent basic need for love and

acceptance and spend significant energy monitoring others' acts for signs of rejection or low positive regard (Baumeister & Leary, 1995).

Controlling Parenting. The coding of offspring's hurtful experiences also show that controlling parenting can result in hurt feelings. Some examples of psychological control by mother and father are, "One thing was emotionally she likes to subconsciously manipulate situations because she always thinks she is right. It is her way or no way" and "My father was upset with how my siblings spoke back to my mom. Immediately he blamed all of us and did not look at the context of the situation. It hurt my feelings that he automatically assumed we were the ones to blame." These examples show that parents attempt to control the offspring via the use of manipulative techniques such as guilt-induction, shaming or love withdrawal, making offspring feel they have no choice but to think or feel in ways implied by their parents. While psychological control mainly tends to control the offspring's psychological experiences, other overcontrolling parenting behaviors that directly intervene in the offspring's personal lives tend to control the offspring's behavior. For instance, some direct quotations from hurtful maternal and paternal experiences are: "A time when my mother hurt me was last summer when she wanted me to break up with my girlfriend" and "During the college admission process he was very hands-on, which is good, but he also made a lot of decisions for me when it came to selecting a college." These examples show that such overcontrolling parenting behaviors not only frustrated offspring's need for autonomy but also are perceived to be hurtful messages by emerging adults even if parents' intentions may be good (e.g., choosing a good college).

Hurtful Events or Interactions. Hurtful events or interactions include interactions directly involving offspring, such as conflict and favoritism, and events not directly targeting the offspring, such as parental mental issues, parental absence, and other forms of indirect hurt. One

common hurtful factor that directly involves offspring is conflict. Conflicts typically are interactions containing negative behaviors and emotions of both parents and offspring, but not all parent-offspring conflicts are detrimental. Research has found conflicts only predicted greater adolescent maladjustment in poorer-quality parent-adolescent relationships (Adams & Laursen, 2007). For instance, one participant responded, "I genuinely can't think of any moments like that. We've argued about things like politics but never actively hurt each other," which was not coded as a hurtful experience based on that arguments may not be hurtful if in the good parent-offspring relationship. On the contrary, some conflicts may end up with hurtful experiences, such as "We fight, and then we don't talk for a long time."

Favoritism is another factor often mentioned by participants. Perceive favoritism of siblings has been found to be a cause of hurt feelings in children (Mills et al., 2002), and was linked to maladjustment in adults (Gilbert & Gerlsma, 1999). Notably, the present study also found that perceived inequality between the parent's partner and the offspring can also be a source of pain. For example, some direct quotations from maternal and paternal experiences are: "When my mother put my step dad first and said I can leave and live with my dad if I don't like him because she needs to live her life" and "My father and I stopped talking for an entire year after he kept choosing his new wife over me," These responses show that the perception of inequitable treatment from parents can make the offspring feel less important than others and can have negative impact on parent-offspring relationships.

Parental psychopathology is one of the factors that is not a direct parenting behavior but could subsequently have a negative impact on offspring via disrupted parenting practices or parent-offspring. For example, one participant mentioned in response of maternal hurtful experiences, "She has a mental illness, so she could not give me a proper parenting," which

supported that parental mental disorders may undermine parenting competence, potentially leading to more negative parenting behaviors (Aquilino, 2006; Chorpita et al., 1998). Another participant mentioned the father's mental issues, "He is an alcoholic and we have gotten into some fights about how he needs to get his life together before we are as close as we used to be," which illustrates that parental dysfunction can be a significant concern for offspring and can provoke intense negative feelings.

Parental absence might coexist with other forms of indirect hurt. Absence does not necessarily mean deliberately abandoning the offspring, although this can cause a sense of abandonment; it can result from indirect hurt, such as parental divorce, which leads to a parent not being present in the offspring's life. For instance, one participant mentioned, "My father cheated on my mother for 10 years and left the family after the divorce." Family disruption in adolescence has been related to poor relationships with parents and high levels of problem behavior (including internalizing and externalizing domains) (Zill et al., 1993). Parental infidelity is also another indirect factor related to family disruption. The witnessing of the hurt of a betrayed parent may results in impaired attachment of offspring (Negash & Morgan, 2016). Relatedly, observing other family members being hurt by parents, such as siblings, can also be hurtful. For example, one participant mentioned, "She hurt me by being rude to my sister and yelling at her because she wouldn't try fish. My sister broke down in tears and was sent to her room, and seeing my sister get hurt is what hurts me the most." Therefore, offspring suffer not only from poor parenting directly but also from poor parenting that they were exposed to indirectly.

Offspring Maltreatment. Two common suspected offspring maltreatment reported by the participants are neglect and psychological maltreatment. Examples of maternal and paternal

neglect from participants' direct quotations are, "I can't remember much of my childhood but I do remember her repeatedly ignoring my needs and dismissing my emotions/feelings, as a result I never opened up to her and we don't really have any real connection at all" and "Mostly just neglect, I never connected with my dad on a deeper level. Also he paid a blind eye to abuse that I received from my stepmother, so his absence and naiveness was hurtful." From the perspectives of PARTheory, neglect can be an extreme manifestation of parental indifference of the offspring's needs and can cause fundamental impairment to parent-offspring relationships.

Psychological maltreatment can be an extreme manifestation of parental hostility and aggression, which not only is severe psychological aggression but also can be accompanied by physical aggression. For instance, one participant reported maternal maltreatment experiences mostly regarding psychological maltreatment, but the mother also displayed physical aggression, "She would blame me for her mistakes, my past mistakes, she would call me a burden and a mistake regularly, threaten to crash the car if I don't do as she said, threaten to kick me out, scream at me regularly. She slapped me when I told her to stop yelling at me. Communication didn't work so I dissociated every other time she had a screaming episode (about 3 times a week) for the next 9 years." Another participant reported paternal maltreatment experiences, in which the severe physical abuse can be one of the sources of psychological maltreatment, "He physically disciplined me when I was young, which is still planted in my mind. It was a time when I was young and naive and did something stupid, but for a 10-year-old, I don't think I should have been through being disciplined with scratches and bruises in the end. From then, I grew up terrified of my father and always hearing him shouting and cursing whenever I or my mom does a little mistake." These examples show that the chronic and severe abusive parenting

behaviors toward the offspring distinguish parental maltreatment from poor parenting practices such as verbal aggression and physical punishment.

Hurtful Parental Experiences and Internalizing Symptoms. Furthermore, the present study utilized F-test to compare the mean score differences in major study variables among participants who were coded "no," "yes," and "unknown" for hurtful maternal and hurtful experiences (See Table 11 and Table 12). Regarding hurtful maternal experiences, although participants with "yes" tend to have similar positive attitudes toward their mother as participants with "no," participants with "no" experienced higher levels of maternal warmth, lower levels of maternal overparenting, and lower levels of internalizing symptoms than participants with "yes." These results suggest that participants who were hurt by mothers may perceive the current parenting behaviors more negatively and suffer more from internalizing problems. Similarly, regarding hurtful paternal experiences, participants with "no" tend to have more positive affects toward their fathers and lower levels of internalizing symptoms than participants with "yes."

Importantly, participants who are coded as "unknown" experienced less parental warmth, more parental overparenting, and less positive attitude toward parents than participants with "no." Those coded as "unknown" also showed these characteristics more than participants with "yes." Moreover, they have the same higher levels of internalizing symptoms as participants with "yes." These results suggest that participants who chose not to disclose hurtful experiences with parents were very likely to be hurt unfairly by parents in the past, thus influencing their current perception of parenting behaviors, attitudes toward parents, and psychological well-being. Therefore, the following regression models, which use parenting behaviors and forgiveness toward parents to predict internalizing symptoms, include emerging adult participants coded as

"yes" and "unknown" for hurtful maternal or paternal factors, as they may have been hurt by their parents and have the real need to forgive their parents.

Table 11

Analyses for Reports of Hurtful Maternal Experiences on Major Study Variables in Wave 1

Variable	Reports of Hurtful Experiences			F	df	p	η^2
	No	Yes	Unknown				
Maternal warmth	28.82_c	27.30_b	23.37_a	10.85	2,831	<.001	.03
Maternal overparenting	51.48_a	55.90_b	68.28_c	17.06	2,830	<.001	.04
EFI-30_affect_M	50.39_b	48.26_b	41.63_a	10.95	2,830	<.001	.03
EFI-30_behavior_M	50.34_b	48.63_b	42.35_a	9.87	2,827	<.001	.02
EFI-30_cognition_M	51.24_b	50.39_b	43.77_a	8.70	2,824	<.001	.02
EFI-30_total_M	151.94_b	147.33_b	127.74_a	10.28	2,824	<.001	.02
Internalizing symptoms	18.51_a	22.97_b	26.90_b	9.67	2,817	<.001	.02

Note. EFI-30 = Enright Forgiveness Inventory-30, M = mother. Means with different subscripts differ at the p = .05 level by Tukey's honestly significant difference (HSD) test.

Table 12

Analyses for Reports of Hurtful Paternal Experiences on Major Study Variables in Wave 1

Variable	Reports of Hurtful Experiences			F	df	p	η^2
	No	Yes	Unknown				
Paternal warmth	28.16_b	26.86_b	23.55_a	8.19	2,827	<.001	.02
Paternal overparenting	48.85_a	49.77_a	60.52_b	7.87	2,826	<.001	.02
EFI-30_affect_F	49.46_c	47.03_b	40.77_a	8.46	2,813	<.001	.02
EFI-30_behavior_F	50.12_b	48.30_{ab}	43.61_a	5.00	2,815	.007	.01
EFI-30_cognition_F	50.69_b	49.28_b	43.16_a	6.00	2,813	.003	.02

EFI-30_total_F	150.74$_b$	144.61$_b$	127.55$_a$	7.19	2,811	<.001	.02
Internalizing symptoms	18.42$_a$	23.24$_b$	26.23$_b$	10.38	2,817	<.001	.03

Note. EFI-30 = Enright Forgiveness Inventory-30, F = father. Means with different subscripts

differ at the *p* = .05 level by Tukey's honestly significant difference (HSD) test.

Regression Results on Mechanisms between Parenting and Internalizing Symptoms

Parenting and Forgiveness on Internalizing Symptoms Among Emerging Adults

with Maltreatment Histories. Emerging Adult's race (dummy coded where "White" was the

reference category), living arrangement (dummy coded where "In the family home" was the

reference category), annual household income (dummy coded where "Less than $25,000" was

the reference category), and social desirability were included as covariates in each of the models

predicting internalizing symptoms.

Table 13 presents two models examining the internalizing symptoms of female emerging

adults who perceived maltreatment in mother-daughter dyads. Model 1 investigated the main

effects of maternal warmth, overparenting, and forgiveness toward the mother. Model 2 extended

Model 1 by including interaction terms between warmth and forgiveness, as well as between

overparenting and forgiveness. In comparing the two regression models, an F-test reveals that the

inclusion of the interaction terms significantly improves the model fit ($F(2, 99) = 4.29$, $p = .016$).

This result suggests that Model 2 provides a better explanation of the data compared to Model 1,

supporting that maternal warmth may interact with forgiveness toward the mother to affect

internalizing symptoms for female emerging adults with maltreatment histories. By categorizing

forgiveness levels into high (one *SD* above the mean score), average (mean score), and low (one

SD below the mean score) groups, a post hoc margins test with Tukey's Honestly Significant

Difference (HSD) method for adjustment was used to further investigate the interaction effects

between warmth and forgiveness. Although the tests did not yield statistically significant results ($t(99) = -1.92$, $p = .138$), possibly due to the more conservative nature of the Tukey HSD test that adjusts for multiple comparisons, an observable trend suggests that, at high levels of maternal warmth (warmth score = 35), female emerging adults with higher forgiveness may have lower levels of internalizing symptoms compared to those with lower forgiveness. See Figure 1. Notably, the post-hoc power analysis indicated that Model 1 has moderate power, with an estimated value of 0.71. Model 2, on the other hand, demonstrates a sufficient power of 0.88, indicating a high likelihood of detecting true interaction effects.

Table 13

Regression Results for Internalizing Symptoms of Emerging Adults with Maltreatment Histories in Mother-Daughter Dyads

	B	SE	95% CI for B		R^2	ΔR^2
			LL	UL		
Model 1					.09	
Intercept	49.753***	10.801	28.327	71.178		
Warmth	-0.169	0.272	-0.709	0.370		
Overparenting	0.060	0.073	-0.084	0.205		
Forgiveness	-0.043	0.067	-0.177	0.090		
Model 2					.14	.05*
Intercept	58.313**	20.318	17.997	98.629		
Warmth	1.222	0.677	-0.122	2.566		
Overparenting	-0.489	0.271	-1.027	0.049		
Forgiveness	-0.086	0.157	-0.397	0.225		

Warmth x Forgiveness	-0.010*	0.005	-0.019	-0.001
Overparenting x Forgiveness	0.004	0.002	0.000	0.008

Note. CI = confidence interval; *LL* = lower limit; *UL* = upper limit.

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.

Figure 1

Interactions between Maternal Warmth and Forgiveness toward Mother on Internalizing

Symptoms of Female Emerging Adults with Maltreatment Histories

Table 14 presents two models examining the internalizing symptoms of male emerging

adults who perceived maltreatment in mother-sone dyads. Model 3 investigated the main effects

of maternal warmth, overparenting, and forgiveness toward the mother. Model 4 examined the

interaction effects between warmth and forgiveness, as well as between overparenting and forgiveness. In comparing the two regression models, an F-test reveals that the inclusion of the interaction terms does not improve the model fit ($F(2, 51) = 0.91$, $p = .409$), which indicates that Model 4 does not provide a better explanation of the data compared to Model 3. Based on Model 3, the results suggest that higher levels of maternal warmth are associated with lower levels of internalizing symptoms for male emerging adults with maltreatment histories. Notably, Model 3 and Model 4 have a power of .88 and .84, respectively, suggesting the power was sufficient to detect if the true main effects and interaction effects exist.

Table 14

Regression Results for Internalizing Symptoms of Emerging Adults with Maltreatment Histories in Mother-Son Dyads

	B	SE	95% CI for B		R^2	ΔR^2
			LL	UL		
Model 3					.20	
Intercept	47.082*	20.165	6.636	87.528		
Warmth	-0.948*	0.413	-1.777	-0.120		
Overparenting	0.183	0.113	-0.044	0.410		
Forgiveness	0.004	0.091	-0.178	0.187		
Model 4					.20	.00
Intercept	65.960*	30.770	4.183	127.746		
Warmth	-0.968	1.291	-3.559	1.623		
Overparenting	-0.175	0.291	-0.759	0.408		
Forgiveness	-0.180	0.212	-0.606	0.246		

Warmth x Forgiveness	0.000	0.008	-0.017	0.017
Overparenting x Forgiveness	0.003	0.002	-0.001	0.008

Note. CI = confidence interval; *LL* = lower limit; *UL* = upper limit.
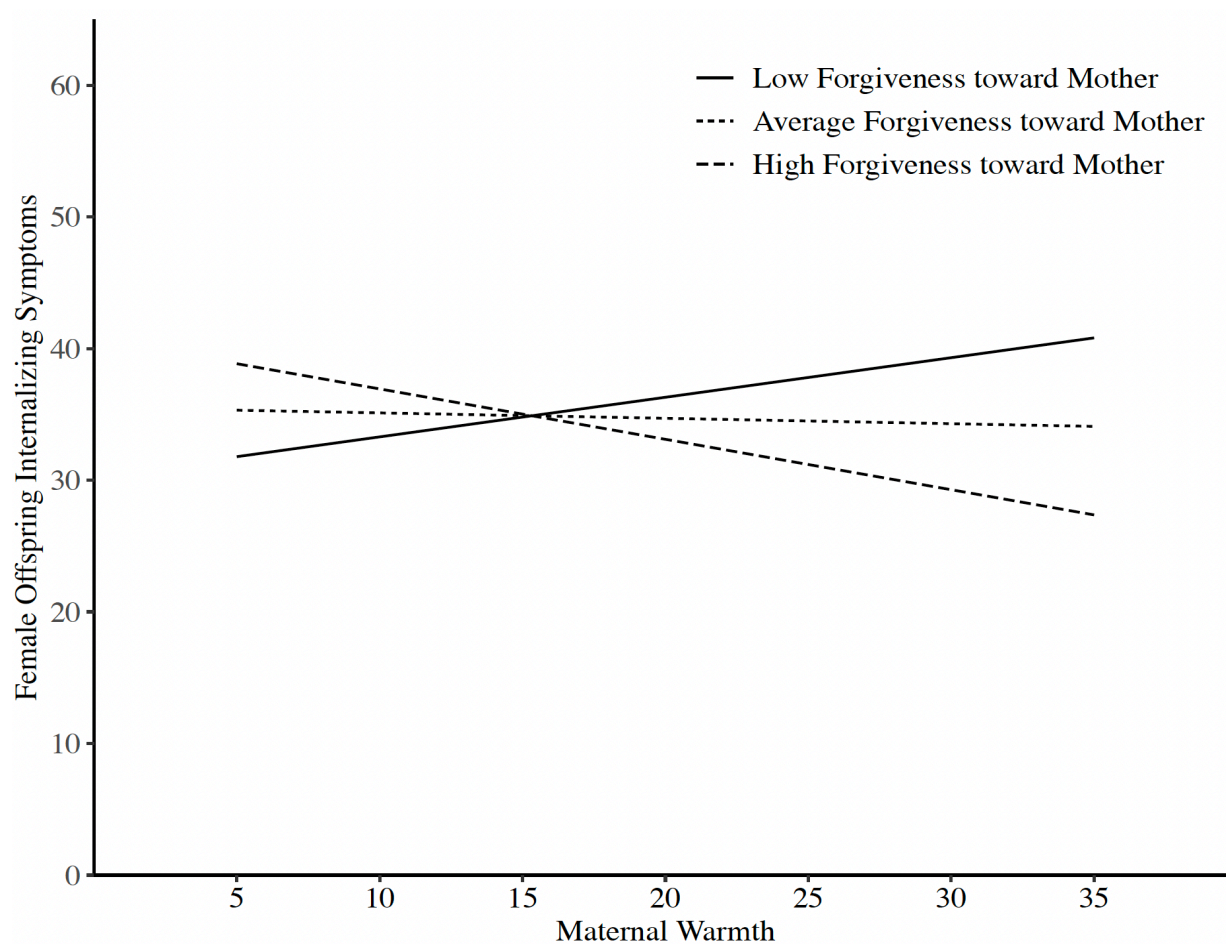
$^*p < .05,$ $^{**}p < .01,$ $^{***}p < .001.$

Table 15 presents two models examining the internalizing symptoms of female emerging adults who perceived maltreatment in father-daughter dyads. Model 5 investigated the main effects of paternal warmth, overparenting, and forgiveness toward the father. Model 6 examined the interaction effects between warmth and forgiveness, as well as between overparenting and forgiveness. In comparing the two regression models, an F-test reveals that the inclusion of the interaction terms does not improve the model fit ($F(2, 89) = 0.22$, $p = .804$), indicating that Model 6 does not provide a better explanation of the data than Model 5. Overall, the results of two models show that paternal warmth, overparenting, and forgiveness toward the father are not associated with internalizing symptoms for female emerging adults with maltreatment histories. The post-hoc power analyses show that Model 5 has a power of .76 and Model 6 has a power of .66, which suggests that there might be insufficient power to detect main effects and interaction effects in father-daughter dyads among emerging adults with maltreatment histories.

Table 15

Regression Results for Internalizing Symptoms of Emerging Adults with Maltreatment Histories in Father-Daughter Dyads

	B	*SE*	95% CI for *B*		R^2	ΔR^2
			LL	*UL*		
Model 5					.11	
Intercept	54.616***	10.899	32.966	76.267		

	B	SE	LL	UL		
Warmth	-0.085	0.254	-0.589	0.419		
Overparenting	0.111	0.070	-0.028	0.249		
Forgiveness	-0.053	0.052	-0.156	0.051		
Model 6					.10	.01
Intercept	58.912**	20.129	18.915	98.909		
Warmth	-0.411	0.576	-1.556	0.735		
Overparenting	0.170	0.247	-0.320	0.661		
Forgiveness	-0.095	0.152	-0.398	0.207		
Warmth x Forgiveness	0.003	0.004	-0.006	0.012		
Overparenting x Forgiveness	0.000	0.002	-0.004	0.004		

Note. CI = confidence interval; *LL* = lower limit; *UL* = upper limit.

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.

Table 16 presents two models examining the internalizing symptoms of male emerging adults who perceived maltreatment in father-son dyads. Model 7 investigates the main effects of paternal warmth, overparenting, and forgiveness toward the father. Model 8 extended Model 7 by including interaction terms between warmth and forgiveness, as well as between overparenting and forgiveness. In comparing the two regression models, an F-test revealed that the inclusion of the interaction terms significantly improves the model fit ($F(2, 53) = 3.26$, $p = .046$). This result suggests that Model 8 provides a better explanation of the data compared to Model 7, supporting that paternal overparenting may interact with forgiveness toward the father to affect internalizing symptoms for male emerging adults with maltreatment histories. By categorizing forgiveness levels into high (one *SD* above the mean score), average (mean score), and low (one *SD* below the mean score) groups, a post hoc margins test with Tukey's HSD

method reveals that there are differences in internalizing symptoms across different forgiveness groups at the low end of the overparenting. See Figure 2. Specifically, at an overparenting score of 15, higher levels of forgiveness are associated with fewer internalizing symptoms among male emerging adults ($t(53) = -3.23$, $p = .006$). This pattern persists at overparenting scores of 30 ($t(53) = -3.21$, $p = .006$) and 45 ($t(53) = -2.82$, $p = .018$). The post-hoc power analyses show that both Model 7 and Model 8 have a power $> .999$.

Table 16

Regression Results for Internalizing Symptoms of Emerging Adults with Maltreatment Histories in Father-Son Dyads

	B	SE	95% CI for B		R^2	ΔR^2
			LL	UL		
Model 7					.36	
Intercept	-0.165***	-0.165	30.007	84.944		
Warmth	-0.165	-0.165	-1.120	0.246		
Overparenting	-0.165	-0.165	-0.033	0.339		
Forgiveness	-0.165*	-0.165	-0.324	-0.006		
Model 8					.41	.05*
Intercept	122.432***	30.607	61.043	183.822		
Warmth	-1.534	0.975	-3.490	0.423		
Overparenting	-0.621	0.328	-1.278	0.037		
Forgiveness	-0.759**	0.262	-1.285	-0.234		
Warmth x Forgiveness	0.010	0.007	-0.005	0.025		
Overparenting x Forgiveness	0.007*	0.003	0.001	0.012		

Note. CI = confidence interval; *LL* = lower limit; *UL* = upper limit.

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.

Figure 2

Interactions between Paternal Overparenting and Forgiveness toward Father on Internalizing Symptoms of Male Emerging Adults with Maltreatment Histories

Parenting and Forgiveness on Internalizing Symptoms Among Emerging Adults without Maltreatment Histories. Emerging Adult's race (dummy coded where "White" was the reference category), living arrangement (dummy coded where "In the family home" was the reference category), annual household income (dummy coded where "Less than $25,000" was

the reference category), and social desirability were included as covariates in each of the models predicting internalizing symptoms.

Table 17 presents two models examining the internalizing symptoms of female emerging adults who did not perceive maltreatment in mother-daughter dyads. Model 9 investigates the main effects of maternal warmth, overparenting, and forgiveness toward the mother. Model 10 extends Model 9 by including interaction terms between warmth and forgiveness, as well as between overparenting and forgiveness. In comparing the two regression models, an F-test reveals that the inclusion of the interaction terms significantly improves the model fit ($F(2, 233)$ = 3.21, p = .042). This result suggests that Model 10 provides a better explanation of the data compared to Model 9, supporting that maternal overparenting interacts with forgiveness toward the mother to affect internalizing symptoms for female emerging adults without maltreatment histories. By categorizing forgiveness levels into high (one SD above the mean score), average (mean score), and low (one SD below the mean score) groups, a post hoc margins test with Tukey's HSD method reveals that there are differences in internalizing symptoms across different forgiveness groups at the high end of the overparenting. See Figure 3. Specifically, at an overparenting score of 105, higher levels of forgiveness are associated with fewer internalizing symptoms among female emerging adults ($t(233)$ = -2.40, p = .045). The post-hoc power analyses show that both Model 9 and Model 10 have a power > .999.

Table 17

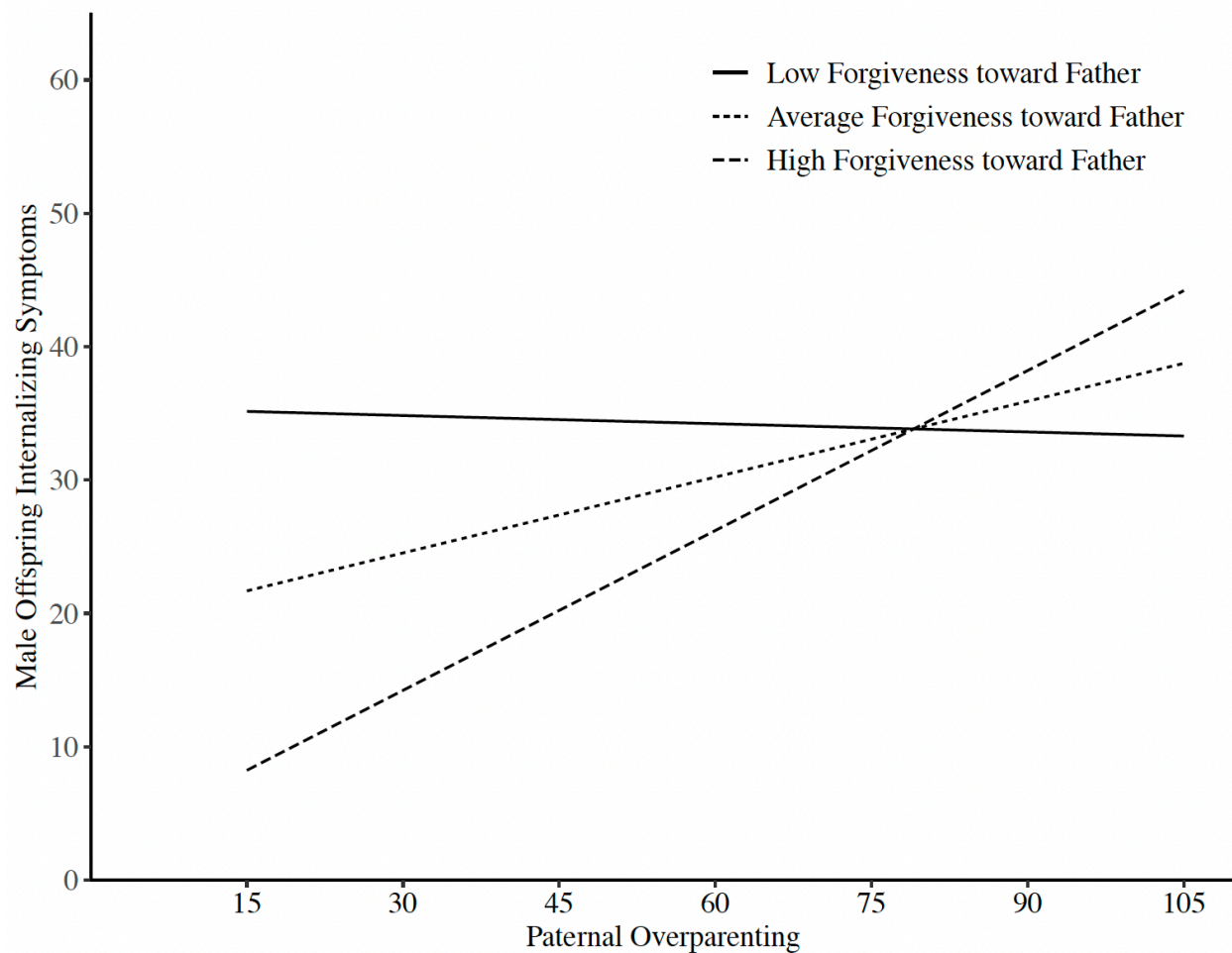*Regression Results for Internalizing Symptoms of Emerging Adults without Maltreatment Histories in Mother-Daughter Dyads*

	B	SE	95% CI for B		R^2	ΔR^2
			LL	UL		

Model 9						.30
Intercept	68.747***	7.173	54.616	82.879		
Warmth	-0.283	0.220	-0.717	0.151		
Overparenting	0.027	0.046	-0.063	0.117		
Forgiveness	-0.087	0.046	-0.178	0.004		
Model 10					.31	.01*
Intercept	63.516**	20.556	23.018	104.015		
Warmth	-1.435*	0.707	-2.828	-0.041		
Overparenting	0.586*	0.257	0.080	1.092		
Forgiveness	-0.066	0.154	-0.370	0.237		
Warmth x Forgiveness	0.007	0.005	-0.002	0.016		
Overparenting x Forgiveness	-0.003*	0.002	-0.007	0.0002		

Note. CI = confidence interval; *LL* = lower limit; *UL* = upper limit.

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$.

Figure 3

Interactions between Maternal Overparenting and Forgiveness toward Mother on Internalizing Symptoms of Female Emerging Adults without Maltreatment Histories
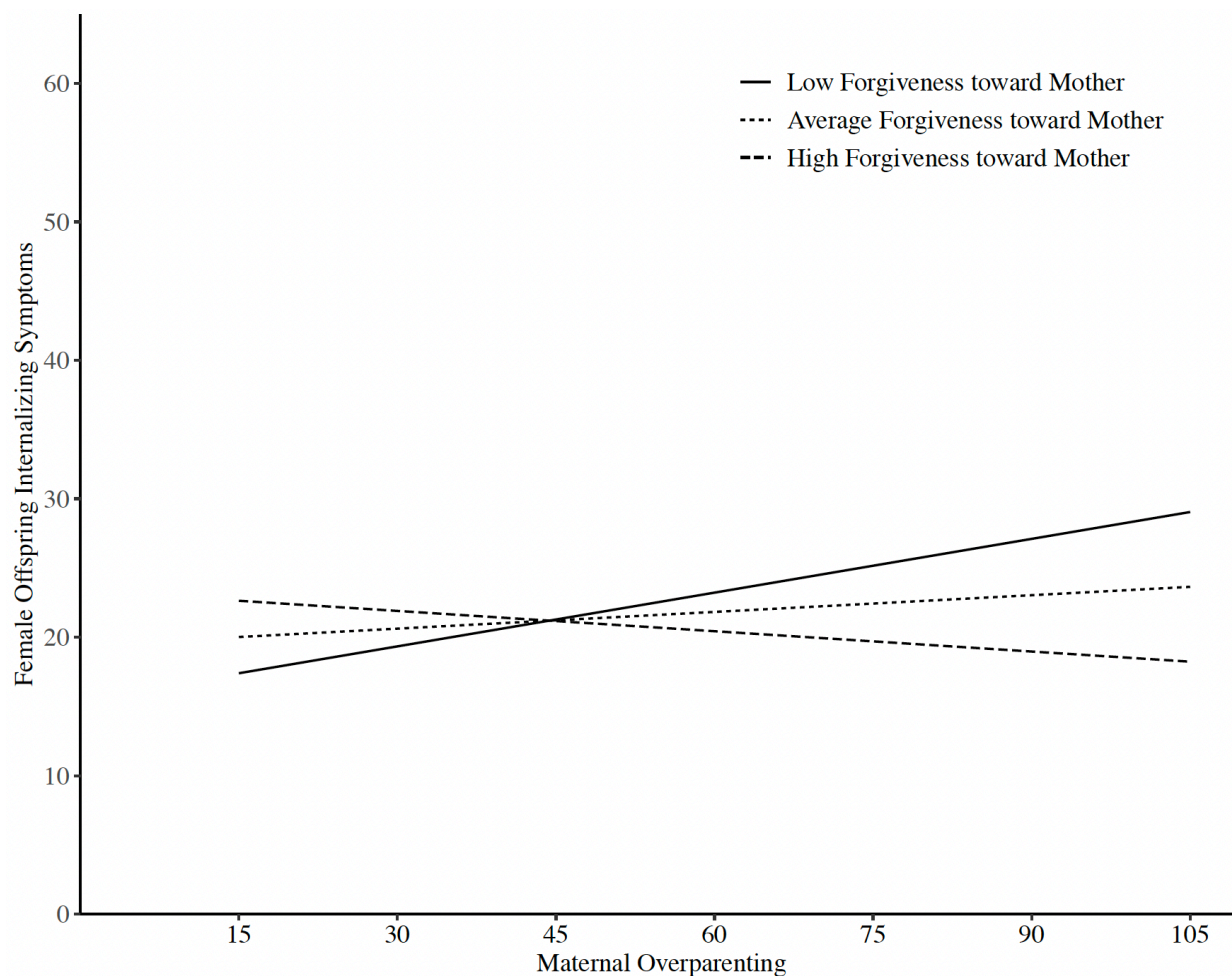

Table 18 presents two models examining the internalizing symptoms of male emerging adults who did not perceive maltreatment in mother-son dyads. Model 11 investigates the main effects of maternal warmth, overparenting, and forgiveness toward the mother. Model 12 examines the interaction effects between warmth and forgiveness, as well as between overparenting and forgiveness. In comparing the two regression models, an F-test reveals that the inclusion of the interaction terms does not improve the model fit ($F(2, 145) = 1.52$, $p = .223$). This result indicate that Model 12 does not explain the data better than Model 11. Overall, Model

11 shows that high levels of maternal overparenting are associated with more internalizing

symptoms, whereas high levels of forgiveness toward the mother are associated with fewer

internalizing symptoms for male emerging adults without maltreatment histories. The post-hoc

power analyses show that both Model 11 and Model 12 have a power > .999.

Table 18

Regression Results for Internalizing Symptoms of Emerging Adults without Maltreatment

Histories in Mother-Son Dyads

	B	SE	95% CI for B		R^2	ΔR^2
			LL	UL		
Model 11					.41	
Intercept	62.722***	9.104	44.730	80.715		
Warmth	-0.114	0.208	-0.524	0.297		
Overparenting	0.138*	0.061	0.018	0.258		
Forgiveness	-0.122*	0.051	-0.222	-0.021		
Model 12					.41	.00
Intercept	41.021	37.692	-33.475	115.517		
Warmth	-0.658	1.093	-2.819	1.503		
Overparenting	0.707	0.362	-0.008	1.422		
Forgiveness	0.027	0.252	-0.470	0.524		
Warmth x Forgiveness	0.003	0.007	-0.011	0.017		
Overparenting x Forgiveness	-0.004	0.002	-0.008	0.001		

Note. CI = confidence interval; LL = lower limit; UL = upper limit.

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$.

Table 19 presents two models examining the internalizing symptoms of female emerging adults who did not perceive maltreatment in father-daughter dyads. Model 13 investigates the main effects of paternal warmth, overparenting, and forgiveness toward the father. Model 14 includes interaction terms between warmth and forgiveness, as well as between overparenting and forgiveness. In comparing the two regression models, an F-test reveals that the inclusion of the interaction terms significantly improves the model fit ($F(2, 218) = 6.86$, $p = .001$). This result suggests that Model 14 provides a better explanation of the data compared to Model 13, supporting that paternal warmth and paternal overparenting may interact with forgiveness toward the father to affect internalizing symptoms for female emerging adults without maltreatment histories. By categorizing forgiveness levels into high (one SD above the mean score), average (mean score), and low (one SD below the mean score) groups, a post hoc margins test with Tukey's HSD method reveals that there are differences in internalizing symptoms across different forgiveness groups at the low end of the warmth. See Figure 4. Specifically, at a warmth score of 5, higher levels of forgiveness are associated with fewer internalizing symptoms among female emerging adults ($t(218) = -2.71$, $p = .020$). This pattern persists at warmth scores of 10 ($t(218) = -2.72$, $p = .020$) and 15 ($t(218) = -2.65$, $p = .023$). There are also differences in internalizing symptoms across different forgiveness groups at the high end of the overparenting. See Figure 5. at an overparenting score of 75, higher levels of forgiveness are associated with fewer internalizing symptoms among female emerging adults ($t(218) = -2.45$ $p = .040$). This pattern persists at overparenting scores of 90 ($t(218) = -2.74$, $p = .018$) and 105 ($t(218) = -2.87$, $p = .012$). After accounting for the interaction terms, the main effects of paternal warmth and overparenting are still significant, with higher levels of warmth associated with fewer internalizing symptoms and high levels of overparenting associated with more internalizing

symptoms. The post-hoc power analyses shows that both Model 13 and Model 14 have a

power > .999.

Table 19

Regression Results for Internalizing Symptoms of Emerging Adults without Maltreatment

Histories in Father-Daughter Dyads

	B	SE	95% CI for B		R^2	ΔR^2
			LL	UL		
Model 13					.29	
Intercept	64.295***	7.020	50.461	78.130		
Warmth	-0.376*	0.179	-0.729	-0.022		
Overparenting	0.076	0.046	-0.016	0.167		
Forgiveness	-0.051	0.038	-0.125	0.023		
Model 14					.32	.03**
Intercept	70.005***	17.690	35.139	104.870		
Warmth	-1.746**	0.599	-2.926	-0.566		
Overparenting	0.725***	0.216	0.299	1.152		
Forgiveness	-0.094	0.120	-0.331	0.143		
Warmth x Forgiveness	0.009*	0.004	0.002	0.017		
Overparenting x Forgiveness	-0.004**	0.001	-0.007	-0.001		

Note. CI = confidence interval; *LL* = lower limit; *UL* = upper limit.

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$.

Figure 4

Interactions between Paternal Warmth and Forgiveness toward Father on Internalizing

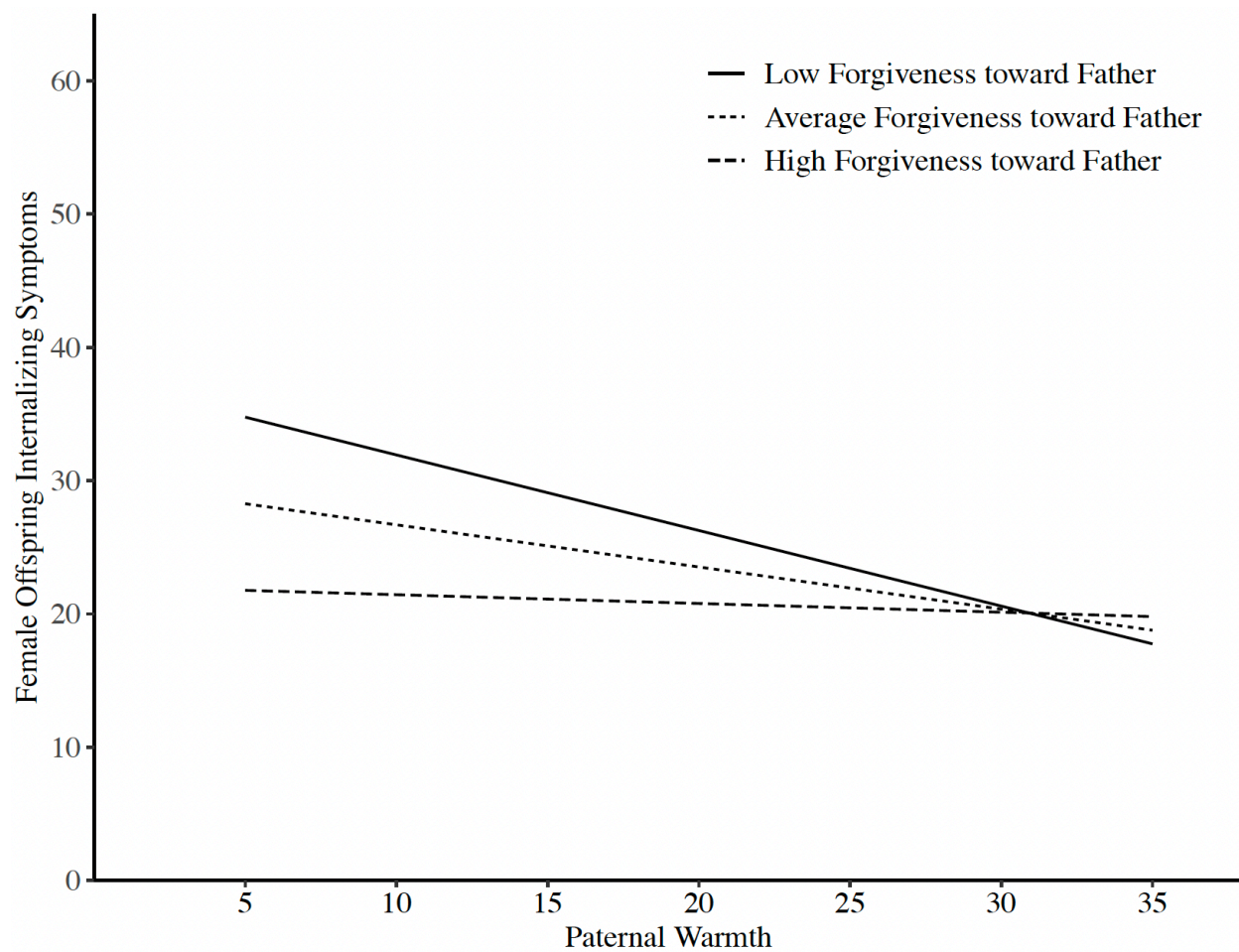*Symptoms of Female Emerging Adults without Maltreatment Histories*

Figure 5

Interactions between Paternal Overparenting and Forgiveness toward Father on Internalizing Symptoms of Female Emerging Adults without Maltreatment Histories
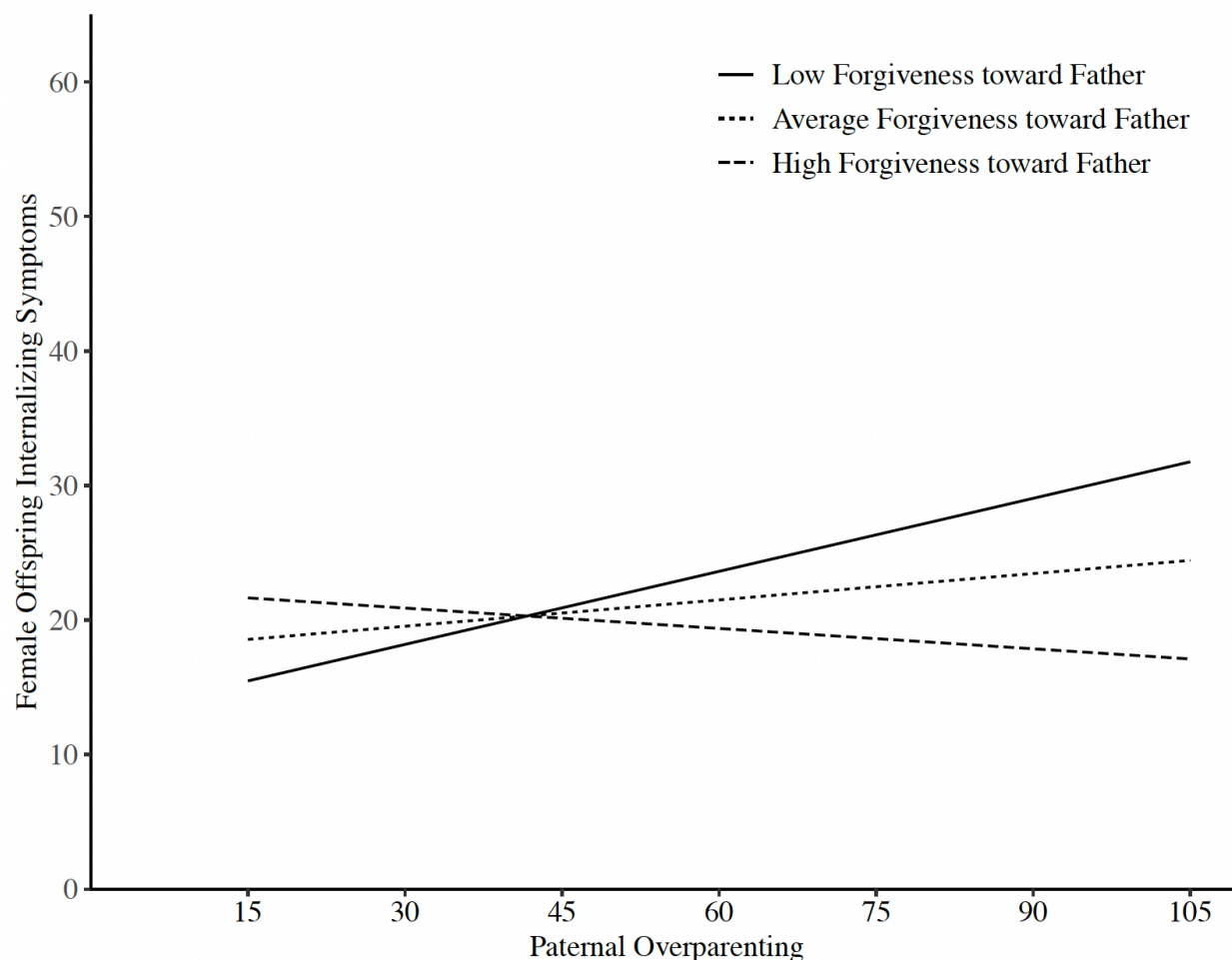

Table 20 presents two models examining the internalizing symptoms of male emerging adults who do not perceive maltreatment in father-son dyads. Model 15 investigated the main effects of paternal warmth, overparenting, and forgiveness toward the father. Model 16 examined the interaction effects between warmth and forgiveness, as well as between overparenting and forgiveness. In comparing the two regression models, an F-test reveals that the inclusion of the interaction terms does not improve the model fit ($F(2, 150) = 1.37$, $p = .26$). This result indicates that Model 16 does not provide a better explanation of the data compared to Model 15. The

results of Model 15 show that high levels of paternal overparenting are associated with more

internalizing symptoms, whereas high levels of forgiveness toward the father are associated with

fewer internalizing symptoms for male emerging adults without maltreatment histories. The post-

hoc power analyses show that both Model 15 and Model 16 have a power > .999.

Table 20

Regression Results for Internalizing Symptoms of Emerging Adults without Maltreatment

Histories in Father-Son Dyads

	B	SE	95% CI for B		R^2	ΔR^2
			LL	UL		
Model 15					.48	
Intercept	65.966***	7.080	51.978	79.954		
Warmth	-0.254	0.175	-0.600	0.091		
Overparenting	0.186***	0.051	0.085	0.286		
Forgiveness	-0.126**	0.041	-0.206	-0.046		
Model 16					.49	.01
Intercept	56.460***	16.741	23.381	89.539		
Warmth	-0.652	0.685	-2.006	0.703		
Overparenting	0.564*	0.234	0.101	1.027		
Forgiveness	-0.054	0.121	-0.293	0.185		
Warmth x Forgiveness	0.002	0.004	-0.006	0.011		
Overparenting x Forgiveness	-0.003	0.002	-0.006	0.001		

Note. CI = confidence interval; LL = lower limit; UL = upper limit.

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$.

Secondary Analysis with Longitudinal and Parent-Report Data

Longitudinal Associations between Parenting and Internalizing Symptoms

The descriptive statistics for the major variables can be seen in Table 21, which includes data from emerging adults who participated in both Wave 1 and the follow-up Wave 2. The correlation coefficients can be seen in Table 22. A strong positive correlation between Wave 1 and Wave 2 internalizing symptoms indicates the stability of these symptoms. Additionally, parental warmth and EFI-30 total score in Wave 1 are negatively associated with internalizing symptoms in Wave 2. Conversely, parental overparenting is positively correlated with Wave 2 internalizing symptoms. These trends are consistent when examining the relationship between Wave 1 internalizing symptoms and Wave 2 parenting behaviors and EFI-30 total score.

Table 21

Descriptive Information on Study Variables for Emerging Adults Completing Two Data Collection Waves

Variable	Wave 1 ($N = 54$)				Wave 2 ($N = 54$)			
	M	*SD*	*Min*	*Max*	*M*	*SD*	*Min*	*Max*
Maternal warmth	26.67	7.86	11	35	26.84	7.09	11	35
Paternal warmth	25.98	8.44	5	35	26.20	7.93	9	35
Maternal overparenting	57.46	19.97	23	102	56.52	20.45	19	96
Paternal overparenting	46.37	21.04	15	100	47.17	20.63	15	85
EFI-30_total_M	146.44	32.98	60	180	142.48	33.00	92	180
EFI-30_total_F	138.91	39.35	61	180	139.06	36.96	45	180
Internalizing symptoms	27.48	13.96	1	53	26.69	14.47	1	58

Note. EFI-30 = Enright Forgiveness Inventory-30, M = mother, F = father

Table 22

Correlations for Study Variables for Emerging Adults Completing Two Data Collection Waves

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Maternal warmth_W1	–													
2. Paternal warmth_W1	.56**	–												
3. Maternal overparenting_W1	-.70**	-.36**	–											
4. Paternal overparenting_W1	-.48**	-.29*	.50**	–										
5. EFI-30_total_M_W1	.85**	.53**	-.69**	-.58**	–									
6. EFI-30_total_F_W1	.52**	.80**	-.34*	-.42**	.63**	–								
7. Internalizing symptoms_W1	-.41**	-.45**	.46**	.36**	-.42**	-.50**	–							
8. Maternal warmth_W2	.92**	.56**	-.67**	-.39**	.80**	.54**	-.44**	–						
9. Paternal warmth_W2	.46**	.88**	-.28	-.27	.43**	.80**	-.47**	.48**	–					
10. Maternal overparenting_W2	-.72**	-.42**	.84**	.55**	-.66**	-.38**	.40**	-.70**	-.31*	–				
11. Paternal overparenting_W2	-.51**	-.33*	.52**	.87**	-.59**	-.45**	.44**	-.45**	-.28*	.67**	–			
12. EFI-30_total_M_W2	.81**	.36*	-.67**	-.60**	.89**	.52**	-.51**	.80**	.35*	-.61**	-.59**	–		
13. EFI-30_total_F_W2	.55**	.78**	-.24	-.47**	.56**	.88**	-.67**	.54**	.80**	-.35*	-.52**	.52**	–	
14. Internalizing symtpoms_W2	-.37**	-.37**	.30*	.48**	-.42**	-.55**	.82**	-.43**	-.39**	.36*	.55**	-.49**	-.66**	–

Note. EFI-30 = Enright Forgiveness Inventory-30, M = mother, F = father. $^{*}p < .05.$ $^{**}p < .01.$

Correlations and Comparisons from Perspectives of Emerging Adults and Parents

Table 23 presents the correlations for variables reported by emerging adult offspring and parents in Wave 1. The data reveals that offspring-report parenting behaviors moderately correlated with parent-report parenting behaviors. Moreover, both offspring and parent-report warmth show a negative correlation with offspring's internalizing symptoms, and both offspring and parent-report overparenting are positively associated with offspring's internalizing symptoms. Importantly, the parent's internalizing symptoms are related to the offspring's internalizing symptoms, suggesting potential intragenerational transmission of these symptoms. However, the parent's social desirability is not related to the offspring's social desirability.

Table 24 presents the comparisons between emerging adult offspring with or without maltreatment histories in both offspring-report and parent-report variables. For those emerging adults who have both self-reports and parent reports, offspring who perceived experience of parental maltreatment reported lower levels of maternal and paternal warmth. They also reported higher levels of paternal overparenting and increased internalizing symptoms. Similarly, the parents of offspring with maturement histories also reported lower warmth toward their offspring. These parents also reported higher levels of internalizing symptoms of their own. Notably, the effect size, as indicated by Cohen's *d*, is large for differences in offspring-report warmth and parent-report warmth, suggesting that the emerging adult who reported experiencing parental maltreatment perceived substantially lower levels of warmth, and the perception was consistent with parent reports. There is no difference in the social desirability of offspring and parents, suggesting the perception of parenting behaviors may not be significantly influenced by the social desirability within this sample.

Table 23

Correlations for Study Variables Reported by Both Offspring and Parents

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Offspring-report maternal warmth	–									
2. Offspring-report paternal warmth	.86**	–								
3. Offspring-report maternal overparenting	-.20	-.29*	–							
4. Offspring-report paternal overparenting	-.29*	-.33*	.84**	–						
5. Offspring's internalizing symptoms	-.46**	-.51**	.49**	.38**	–					
6. Offspring's social desirability	.55**	.44**	-.19	-.23	-.51**	–				
7. Parent-report warmth	.47**	.53**	-.32*	-.39**	-.31*	.40**	–			
8. Parent-report overparenting	-.48**	-.34**	.40**	.42**	.26*	-.24	-.17	–		
9. Parent's internalizing symptoms	-.30*	-.28*	.44**	.55**	.34**	-.12	-.32*	.45**	–	
10. Parent's social desirability	.41**	.32*	-.19	-.28*	-.26*	.23	.35**	-.51**	-.58**	–

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

Table 24

Differences in Offspring-report and Parent-report Variables for Emerging Adults with or without Perceive Parental Maltreatment in Wave 1

Variable	With		Without		*t*	*df*	*p*	*Cohen's d*
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*				
Offspring-report maternal warmth	20.19	5.85	26.76	5.88	-4.37	59	<.001	-1.12
Offspring-report paternal warmth	21.19	5.20	26.86	6.47	-3.79	59	<.001	-0.97
Offspring-report maternal overparenting	59.97	14.52	55.76	16.04	1.08	59	.143	0.28
Offspring-report paternal overparenting	61.63	12.44	54.21	17.27	1.94	59	.029	0.50
Offspring's internalizing symptoms	29.94	7.42	22.39	13.32	2.75	58	.004	0.71
Offspring's social desirability	65.81	9.28	68.36	6.96	-1.19	58	.120	-0.31
Parent-report warmth	22.58	5.31	27.71	4.38	-4.09	59	<.001	-1.05
Parent-report overparenting	66.20	13.68	64.19	15.34	0.54	59	.295	0.14
Parent's internalizing symptoms	10.06	7.29	5.45	8.93	2.22	59	.015	0.57
Parent's social desirability	68.66	11.12	73.59	13.46	-1.55	58	.063	-0.40

Discussion

The Necessity of Forgiveness toward Parents

The qualitative coding results of hurtful experiences with mother and father indicated that approximately 70% of emerging adults had experienced hurt feelings at least once when directly and indirectly interacting with their parents, suggesting that it is not uncommon that offspring are vulnerable and can be hurt in families (Leary et al., 1998; Vangelisti et al., 2007). According to Enright's forgiveness theory (1994), in situations where people feel offended and have a need to forgive, the offense should be an objective reality, not merely a perception by the one offended. Furthermore, the offense can be indirect personal involvement, and it is not necessary for the offender to have intended the harm. Even though the hurtful parental factors were based on subjective reports, it is important to recognize that their reports can be categorized into specific hurtful parental factors by third-party coding, demonstrating objective realities. Additionally, some events might not have been directly targeting the offspring, and parents typically do not have the intention to cause harm, yet parental actions can still result in the offspring's hurt feelings. Therefore, the offspring's subjective reports are valid, underscoring the necessity of forgiveness, if the offspring so chooses, toward parents.

Some hurtful experiences reported by participants can be categorized into multiple hurtful maternal or paternal factors, whereas female participants tend to report more experiences that contain multiple hurtful factors. This result is consistent with the gender differences in hurtful emotional expression, with women often reporting more intense hurtful messages than men when encountering negative emotions (Cho, 2022). Nevertheless, the types of hurtful parental factors for both female and male emerging adults can be categorized into four aspects: parental rejection, parental controlling behaviors, events or interactions directly or indirectly

involving the offspring, and offspring maltreatment, which emphasizes the importance of understanding the emerging adult offspring's hurtful experiences with their parents and to highlight the potential benefits of forgiveness toward parents.

Consistent with previous studies that identified hurtful parental messages in children and adolescents (McLaren & Sillars, 2014; Mills et al., 2002), verbal aggression, including yelling, humiliation, criticism, disgust, and contempt, was one common form of parental rejection that conveys the message of a negative global attribution about the child or devaluation, leading to hurtful feelings. Psychological aggression in childhood has been found to be the most predictive factor of psychological symptoms (including depression and anxiety) in young adults compared to physical aggression (Miller-Perrin et al., 2009). The present study also found that controlling parenting can be interpreted as indications of a lack of concern for their autonomy needs, resulting in hurt feelings. Parental controlling socialization, according to the SDT's perspectives, undermines offspring's propensity for autonomous regulation and is associated with psychosocial maladjustment (Deci et al., 1994). Moreover, other hurtful events or interactions (e.g., parental divorce) may be traumatic for offspring, but professional guidance is often beneficial in navigating these challenging circumstances. For instance, Freedman and Knupp (2003) utilized an educational intervention with forgiveness to help adolescents adjust to parental divorce, illustrating significantly decreased anxiety after the intervention. This result supported the idea that forgiveness can effectively deal with interpersonal hurts by not holding onto negative feelings. If emerging adults can actively choose to forgive, it may also foster more healthy family interactions, leading to better adjustment (DiBlasio & Proctor, 1993; Hines, 1997).

It is important to recognize that when comparing participants' self-report of experiencing parental maltreatment with the qualitative coding of suspected maltreatment by a third party, a significant discrepancy is observed: approximately 25% of participants reported maltreatment histories[3] versus 3% identified by a third party. However, the disparity highlights the differences between subjective experiences and relatively objective evaluations, which align with the distinction between self-report surveys and official statistics. If using participants' self-report items similar to the present study, it has been shown to result in similar rates among adults, with approximately 20% of adults reporting parental childhood abuse (Kong & Martire, 2019). In contrast, according to the latest report by the Children's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2024), the national rate of suspected maltreatment report is 29.0 per 1,000 children (around 2.9%) in the national population, and 50.5% of the reports are screened-out upon further investigation. Furthermore, the findings were consistent with a meta-analysis that revealed self-reported rates of child maltreatment varied from 12.7% to 36.3% across different types of maltreatment, averaging approximately 21%, whereas rates derived from informant reports ranging only from 3% to 4% (Stoltenborgh et al., 2015). The lower rates of informant reports can explain why a small number of cases received child welfare action and are officially classified as child maltreatment. However, researchers have argued that adult retrospective reports of adverse childhood experiences can be sufficiently valid (Hardt & Rutter, 2004). Indeed, the preliminary analysis results indicated that emerging adults who perceived they had experienced parental maltreatment exhibited significantly higher levels of internalizing symptoms than those without maltreatment histories. Additionally, emerging adults with

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[3] The rate was estimated using the full sample, but the rate is approximately 30% when considering only those who reported hurtful parental experiences.

maltreatment histories reported more negative current parenting behaviors and had more negative attitudes toward parents, suggesting the importance of personal perceptions in understanding the extensive impact of maltreatment. It also has been argued that self-reporting is the only way to estimate the actual rates of child maltreatment (Miller-Perrin & Perrin, 2012). Therefore, the present study based on subjective reports of parental maltreatment to divide participants into two groups, those with and without maltreatment histories, can provide valuable insights into the gender-specific mechanisms by which parenting, forgiveness, and internalizing symptoms are connected in the context of maltreatment histories.

Gender-Specific Pathways of Internalizing Symptoms

The main analysis of regression models utilizing the Wave 1 sample focused on self-reports from emerging adults, revealing that female and male emerging adults may have differential perceptions of maternal and paternal parenting behaviors. The differences may extend to their forgiveness toward mother and father, illustrating gender-specific pathways that link parenting and forgiveness with internalizing symptoms, which supported the distinct nature of parent-offspring dyads based on the gender of both the parent and the offspring (Russell & Saebel, 1997). Moreover, the present study identified different patterns between emerging adults with and those without maltreatment histories, highlighting the significant influences of past maltreatment histories on these dynamics.

For Emerging Adults with Maltreatment Histories

First, mother-daughter dyads and father-daughter dyads showed different pathways linking current parenting behaviors, forgiveness, and internalizing symptoms for emerging adults with maltreatment histories. For female emerging adults with parental maltreatment histories, the main effects of current parenting behaviors and forgiveness were not significant, but if daughters

had higher levels of forgiveness toward their mother, forgiveness might enhance the positive effect of current maternal warmth, thereby reducing internalizing symptoms of female emerging adults. Previous studies have found that maltreatment histories have been linked with lower levels of forgiveness tendencies, which may subsequently affect individuals' mental health (Arslan, 2017; Snyder & Heinze, 2005). Therefore, it is important to acknowledge that there was difficulty in forgiving the parents if the parents mistreated the individuals, which might break the fundamental trust toward parents. However, if individuals experience more maternal warmth during emerging adulthood, they may reframe the negative perception toward the mother, thereby having greater forgiveness toward the mother. With the additive protecting effects of maternal warmth and letting go of the negative emotions from forgiveness, female emerging adults with maltreatment histories could have fewer internalizing problems.

However, in father-daughter dyads, none of the paternal warmth, overparenting, and forgiveness toward the father predicted internalizing symptoms in female emerging adults with maltreatment histories. On the one hand, it should be noted that the statistical power of the regression model was limited in father-daughter pathways with maltreatment histories. On the other hand, it might indicate that the impact of current paternal parenting and forgiveness toward the father on the maltreated female offspring was indeed minimal. Fathers tend to be less sensitive to daughters' needs than mothers during childhood (Schoppe-Sullivan et al., 2006), a tendency that appears to persist into emerging adulthood, leading to women perceiving their relationships with fathers as more emotionally distant than those with their mothers (Freeman & Almond, 2010; Nielsen, 2007). It also has been highlighted that fathers are overrepresented as perpetrators of severe physical child abuse and neglect (Radhakrishna et al., 2001). Therefore, it is possible that the female emerging adults with parental maltreatment histories might have

experienced more maltreatment from fathers (somewhat supported by the qualitative coding of hurtful experiences that suggested higher rates of paternal maltreatment than maternal maltreatment toward daughters). Taken together, the maltreated female emerging adults may generally hold less positive views of current paternal parenting behaviors and be less forgiving toward their father, which in turn could lead to a minimal impact of these factors.

In mother-son dyads, maternal warmth was the only significant predictor, with greater maternal warmth predicting lower levels of internalizing symptoms in male emerging adults. Even though it has been suggested that the need for parental acceptance is greater during childhood (Mendo-Lázaro et al., 2019), considering that maternal warmth was also an influential factor in mother-daughter dyads, these results, taken together, suggest that the need for acceptance may remain unfulfilled, particularly for those who experienced maltreatment. Additionally, given the greater involvement of mothers in the lives of emerging adults (Smorti et al., 2022), maternal warmth may continue to be an important factor for maltreated offspring during emerging adulthood. Snyder and Heinze (2005) found that among college students with child maltreatment histories, males were less engaged in forgiveness than females, which might explain why forgiveness toward mothers was not a significant factor for males with maltreatment histories.

Nevertheless, in father-son dyads, sons' higher levels of forgiveness toward their fathers predicted low levels of internalizing symptoms, and if the paternal overparenting was at lower levels, forgiveness amplified the benefits of less overparenting, thereby further reducing internalizing symptoms of male emerging adults. Previous studies suggested that father-son dyads may be characterized by less optimal parenting than other parent-offspring dyads, with the father showing less sensitive and more negative control to sons in young childhood (Barnett et

al., 2008; Lovas, 2005), and male children appear to display relatively more anxiety and depression in response to disrupted paternal parenting as compared with maternal parenting (Katz & Gottman, 1993). Hence, male emerging adults with maltreatment histories may be especially more sensitive to paternal overparenting. However, forgiveness toward the father can serve as a protective factor, especially if they experienced less negative control from the father; forgiveness can further enhance the positive impact of reduced paternal control, leading to fewer internalizing symptoms.

For Emerging Adults without Maltreatment Histories

For female emerging adults without maltreatment histories, the mother-daughter and father-daughter dyads showed similar patterns that greater maternal warmth predicted fewer internalizing symptoms and more overparenting predicted more internalizing symptoms, which suggested that current parental warmth and overparenting are critical predictors for offspring's internalizing symptoms in emerging adulthood, especially within the typical population that was not maltreated. Even when accounting for parental warmth, parental overparenting was still detrimental to the offspring's mental health. These findings were consistent studies emphasizing the importance of autonomy needs during emerging adulthood, and overparenting can lead to increased internalizing symptoms via frustrating the autonomy needs of offspring (Cui et al., 2019; Darlow et al., 2017).

However, the interactive effects between parenting and forgiveness were different between mother-daughter and father-daughter dyads. In mother-daughter dyads, the forgiveness toward the mother only interacted with maternal overparenting. Specifically, if female emerging adults experienced high levels of maternal overparenting during emerging adulthood, increased forgiveness toward mothers can protect them against the negative impact of overparenting,

leading to fewer internalizing symptoms. In father-daughter dyads, forgiveness toward the father interacted with both paternal warmth and paternal overparenting. If paternal warmth was low, increased forgiveness toward the father protected the offspring from the adverse effects of this lack of paternal warmth. Similarly, in cases of excessive paternal overparenting, increased forgiveness toward father protected offspring against the negative impact of overparenting, resulting in lower levels of internalizing symptoms. The unique interaction effect between paternal warmth and forgiveness toward the father may be explained by the possible cross-gender differences identified in a meta-analysis, suggesting that adult recall of paternal acceptance in childhood is more strongly related to the psychological well-being of adult daughters than that of adult sons (Ali et al., 2015). It is possible that among emerging adults without maltreatment histories, females are more sensitive to current paternal warmth. Furthermore, considering that forgiveness is recognized as a restorative and emotionally healing process that helps resolve negative emotions and improve interpersonal relationships, including family relationships (Akhtar et al., 2017; Worthington, 2007), forgiveness toward the father can be particularly beneficial for females who experienced a lack of paternal warmth. Higher levels of forgiveness toward fathers can improve females' well-being by enabling positive relationships with fathers, which in turn predicted fewer internalizing symptoms.

On the other hand, no interaction effect was found in mother-son dyads and father-son dyads, and only the main effects of overparenting and forgiveness emerged. Similarly, more maternal and paternal overparenting predicted higher levels of internalizing symptoms, and forgiveness toward mother and father predicted a decrease in these symptoms. These findings suggesting that parental overparenting played a distinct role in internalizing symptoms of male emerging adults may underscore the importance of autonomy needs for men, who are often

found to have more independent self-construal compared to women (Cross & Madson, 1997; Kashima et al., 1995). This sense of viewing themselves as autonomous, distinct, and separate from others may be particularly salient for men during emerging adulthood, a phase characterized by an increased need for autonomy. Additionally, the fact that male late adolescents have reported lower levels of paternal care and higher levels of parental conflict (McKinney & Renk, 2008b) might also explain the minimal influence of parental warmth on the internalizing symptoms in male emerging adults.

Despite differences in specific pathways in four parent-offspring dyads, forgiveness toward parents was associated with a decrease in internalizing symptoms, especially among the typical emerging adult population without maltreatment histories. Mills et al. (2002) found that children who perceived greater rejection by their parents' hurtful acts tend to feel worse about themselves, whereas forgiveness is linked to enhanced self-esteem (Lundahl et al., 2008). Therefore, individuals with higher levels of forgiveness toward their parents might have more positive self-evaluation, leading to improved mental health. Although Gençoğlu et al. (2018) did not find the forgiveness of others to be a significant predictor of depression, anxiety, or stress among college students, this may be due to their focus on the general tendency to forgive others rather than forgiveness specifically toward parents. The present study notes that forgiveness levels toward parents are relatively higher in emerging adults without maltreatment histories compared to forgiveness toward friends, relatives, or employers in typical emerging adults, as reported by EFI-30 (approximate mean score of 150 vs. mean score of 130) (Wang Xu et al., 2022). The positive attitude toward parents might be critical for individuals by mitigating the impact of perceived negative parental behaviors, facilitating better psychological adjustment (Lee & Enright, 2009). Some studies also did not identify the moderating role of forgiveness

toward others between insecure attachment and depressive symptoms among college students (Liao & Wei, 2015), and between parental psychological aggression and anxiety among preschoolers in China (Kwok et al., 2017). One possible explanation is that they may fail to consider the gender-specific effects. Moreover, it might further highlight that using measures of general propensity to forgive others may overlook the nuanced, interpersonal nature of forgiveness. Given that the parent-offspring relationship is often the most enduring and emotionally close relationship a person has (Golish, 2000), it is important to consider the protective effects of forgiveness within specific interpersonal relationships.

Comparisons Between Emerging Adults with and without Maltreatment Histories

Overall, the gender-specific pathways showed different patterns between emerging adults with and without maltreatment histories. According to PARTheory, it is very likely that offspring who experienced parental maltreatment may perceive extreme parental rejection, which may not only directly have impacts on internalizing symptoms but also may affect personality dispositions (e.g., impaired self-esteem) and results in more negative worldviews in long run (Khaleque & Rohner, 2002b; Rohner, 2004). Therefore, emerging adults who experienced parental maltreatment may experience similar current parenting behaviors but perceive current parenting behaviors more negatively than those without maltreatment histories. However, it is important to acknowledge that the maltreatment history is not merely reflecting offspring's perception. The results of the secondary analysis with parent-report data showed that emerging adults with maltreatment histories reported substantially lower levels of parental warmth; moreover, their parents also reported significantly lower levels of warmth toward them, suggesting the perceived parental maltreatment was not only subjective but may objectively

reflect the ongoing lack of parental warmth. This also further supported that adult retrospective reports of maltreatment can be sufficiently valid (Hardt & Rutter, 2004).

Notably, offspring with maltreatment histories had higher levels of internalizing symptoms and their parents also reported higher levels of internalizing symptoms of their own. This is consistent with findings that the offspring of depressed or anxious parents are often at higher risk for developing internalizing problems (Turner et al., 2005; Weissman et al., 2016). With the vast majority of parents in this subsample being biological parents, the emerging adults with maltreatment histories reporting more internalizing symptoms may also suggest genetic influences, in which depression and anxiety disorders typically have mild to moderate heritability (Kendall et al., 2021; Sung et al., 2011). The perceived maltreatment/ongoing lack of parental warmth and potential genetic influences may additively increase the risks of internalizing problems in emerging adulthood, consequently resulting in different pathways linking current parenting to internalizing symptoms.

Furthermore, the protective roles of forgiveness toward parents were less significant among emerging adults with maltreatment histories, especially within mother-son and father-daughter dyads. The potential protective effects of forgiveness were only significant in mother-daughter and father-son dyads for those with maltreatment histories, which may be partially due to the fact that interactive synchrony between parenting and offspring is typically higher in same-gender parent-offspring dyads (Feldman, 2003). However, it is important to note that for emerging adults with maltreatment histories, forgiveness toward parents did not mitigate the impact of negative parenting (i.e., low warmth or high overparenting) but enhanced the benefits of positive parenting (i.e., high warmth or low overparenting). These results suggest that only under more positive environments can the higher levels of forgiveness result in lower levels of

internalizing symptoms. According to the stress-vulnerability model, a positive outcome of a psychiatric disorder is more likely if environmental stress is minimized or managed well (Sun et al., 2022); it is possible that maltreated emerging adults had much more internalizing problems before entering emerging adulthood. Therefore, they require a more positive environment during emerging adulthood.

In contrast, the forgiveness of emerging adults without maltreatment can protect them against the impact of negative parenting. According to the definition of forgiveness, forgiveness is a process that the offended chooses to forgive the offender willingly, which can occur regardless of the offender's current attitudes or behaviors, underscoring that forgiving is the individual's volitional response (Enright et al., 1998). It is comprehensible that offspring whose parents did not maltreat them could have better relationships with their parents and would be more willing to forgive their parents even though they encountered some hurtful experiences. In contrast, those who have experienced parental maltreatment might struggle to voluntarily overcome the resentment feeling, condemnation, and indifference or tendency toward subtle revenge toward the parents. Indeed, the present study found that emerging adults with maltreatment histories have lower levels of forgiveness toward parents than those without maltreatment histories. As a result, the forgiveness toward parents among maltreated emerging adults may be more influenced by the current parenting behaviors, with increased positive parenting behaviors correlating with greater forgiveness. Therefore, forgiveness intervention might be particularly critical for maltreated individuals. Previous literature indicates that forgiveness therapy can improve the psychological well-being of those who have experienced significant adversities (Haroon et al., 2021; Reed & Enright, 2006; Yu et al., 2021). Forgiveness interventions or forgiveness educational programs could also benefit emerging adults with

maltreatment histories by fostering stronger self-control (Burnette et al., 2014), allowing them to regain autonomous self-regulation during this especially challenging period of emerging adulthood.

Limitations and Future Directions

First, one major limitation of the present study is the small sample size in Wave 2, which restricted the statistical power needed to replicate regression models in the main analysis. Therefore, the findings were primality based on the cross-sectional data, precluding causal inferences. In the secondary longitudinal data analysis, the correlation analysis showed correlations between Wave 1 parenting behaviors and forgiveness with Wave 2 internalizing symptoms, and vice versa. This bidirectionality suggests that we cannot rule out the possibility that emerging adults with higher levels of internalizing symptoms might perceive the current parenting behaviors more negatively and have lower levels of forgiveness toward parents. Furthermore, the small sample size in Wave 1, consisting of reports from both emerging adults and their parents, limited the ability to both replicate the main regression analyses and explore the longitudinal relationships within this subsample. Future longitudinal research should incorporate multiple informants of parenting behaviors to further clarify the directional dynamics between parenting, forgiveness, and internalizing symptoms. Future research should also include parental internalizing symptoms to either control for genetic influences or investigate how parenting behaviors and forgiveness contribute to the intergenerational transmission of internalizing symptoms.

Second, the reliance on participants' self-reported experiences of parental maltreatment introduces potential bias, which might be influenced by their current psychological state. It is plausible that emerging adults with heightened internalizing symptoms may also interpret

negative parenting as maltreatment to a greater extent, potentially exaggerating the rate of maltreatment. Indeed, the Wave 2 survey reveals variability in maltreatment perceptions over time; although the majority of the subsample did not change the perception of maltreatment histories, some participants who initially reported experiencing maltreatment in Wave 1 later reported no such experiences in Wave 2 and vice versa. This variability highlights the potential instability of the retrospective self-report in the present study. Moreover, it has been suggested that retrospective and prospective assessments of child maltreatment may lead to divergent risk pathways of mental illness (Baldwin et al., 2019). Therefore, longitudinal studies are necessary to adopt both retrospective and prospective measures of maltreatment to track the trajectories of internalizing symptoms better and to test whether current parenting behaviors, forgiveness, and internalizing symptoms could alter their long-term cognitions that influence the perceptions of parental maltreatment.

Third, using only a single item to measure perceived parental maltreatment may not adequately capture its complex impacts on emerging adults. For instance, the present study did not distinguish between maltreatment inflicted by one or both parents, whereas maltreatment by both parents can lead to more severe internalizing and externalizing problems compared to maltreatment by just one parent (McKinney et al., 2020). Furthermore, the source of maltreatment (mother vs. father) may also influence the relationships between parenting, forgiveness toward parents, and internalizing symptoms. In addition, the present study did not categorize the subtypes of offspring maltreatment by a single item, whereas subtypes of child maltreatment have been shown to differentially affect emotional competence in emerging adults (Cheng & Langevin, 2023). Thus, future research with longitudinal design should incorporate multiple assessment methods, including both self-reports and parent-reports for each parent,

along with detailed questionnaires that identify specific offspring maltreatment subtypes, to more thoroughly understand the pathways of internalizing symptoms.

Fourth, when emerging adult participants reported their hurtful experiences with parents and were asked to report maltreatment histories, the current study did not differentiate between experiences of parental maltreatment occurring in emerging adulthood and those occurring in childhood or adolescence. This lack of distinction might impact the interpretation of the data, as it remains unclear whether maltreatment experienced in emerging adulthood has the same effects as that experienced in earlier developmental stages, especially given that offspring maltreatment in emerging adulthood is less studied compared to child maltreatment (McKinney et al., 2020). Future research could benefit from clearly distinguishing these periods and broadening the scope of child maltreatment studies to include maltreatment during emerging adulthood, thereby extending the concept to a broader framework of offspring maltreatment.

Fifth, the present study did not measure participants' subjective rating of the severity of hurtful parental experiences and their cognitive-affective dispositions in response to hurtful interactions. Research suggests that the subjective and objective ratings of transgression severity can interact with rejection sensitivity to affect forgiveness levels (Fincham et al., 2005). Although negative parenting behaviors are highly likely to be perceived as parental rejection, the offspring's emotional dispositions, such as rejection sensitivity, may influence the forgiveness and their self-evaluation and worldview, thus impacting their mental health over time. For instance, children with helpless cognitive styles showed heightened sensitivity to hurtful messages and were more likely to feel bad about themselves during hurtful interactions (Dweck, 2013). Therefore, more studies, including subjective appraisals and cognitive-affective

dispositions, can enhance the understanding of the mechanisms linking current parenting, forgiveness, and internalizing symptoms.

Sixth, although the current study sample featured a relatively balanced representation of racial differences, the data collection was limited to the U.S., omitting potential cultural influences on parenting and forgiveness, which reduces the generalizability of the findings. For example, variations in specific overparenting behaviors among Chinese versus American emerging adults may partly arise from cultural differences in filial piety and intergenerational dependence typical of collectivist societies (Hong, 2021). These cultural distinctions could also influence emerging adults' forgiveness toward parents. Indeed, Fu and Hui (2004) noted that collectivistic culture and an interdependent self-orientation significantly contribute to the Chinese propensity for forgiveness, suggesting that emerging adults in Chinese culture may feel a stronger obligation to forgive their parents. Future research should explore how emerging adults in different cultural contexts perceive parenting and forgiveness, which could reveal nuanced mechanisms underlying internalizing problems and could also extend to include externalizing problems, broadening our understanding of the developmental impacts of parenting and forgiveness on emerging adults' broader psychopathology across cultures.

Practical Implications

The present study, which focused on the effects of current parental warmth and overparenting on internalizing symptoms, highlights the importance of current parenting behaviors during emerging adulthood, in which offspring are gaining autonomy but still require some levels of parental support. It is essential that parental warmth is maintained or even increased for those who were hurt by parents in the past. Meanwhile, overparenting should be avoided; despite parental potential well-meaning intention, it can be detrimental. Parenting

programs could further benefit from adjustments tailored to this specific developmental stage of offspring, particularly in reducing overcontrolling parenting behaviors.

The current study also supports the potential of forgiveness as a protective factor for emerging adults. Intervention programs that focus on forgiveness could be beneficial, not only for emerging adults without maltreatment histories but also for emerging adults with parental maltreatment histories in overcoming mental health challenges and protecting them against harmful parenting. Studies have shown that forgiveness group therapy helped college students with unresolved interpersonal hurt alleviate anger and boost self-efficacy (Luskin et al., 2005) and helped college students who were hurt in romantic relationships reduce their internalizing symptoms (Zhang et al., 2014). Therefore, similar programs focusing on parental hurts could be helpful not only for emerging adults who were hurt by common negative parent-offspring interactions but also for those who were hurt by parental maltreatment. However, it is crucial to recognize that forgiveness should not be imposed, particularly on those who have been or are being abused by their parents. Any intervention promoting forgiveness must be approached with caution and presented as an option. The goal is to alleviate mental health issues and foster strengths for optimal functioning, without suggesting that individuals abandon their right to seek justice.

The present study also sheds light on various direct and indirect parent-offspring interactions that can be perceived as hurtful, as reported by many emerging adults. Consistent with prior recommendations (Butchart et al., 2004), this underscores the need for widespread educational initiatives that help most parents receive the necessary support, education, and awareness to enhance their pivotal parenting role and mitigate negative parenting practices, which could play a crucial in early prevention programs for reducing internalizing symptoms in

offspring. These programs may also benefit from emphasizing the distinct roles of mother and father and their unique influences on female and male emerging adults' development.

Last but not least, the present study highlights that the adverse experiences of emerging adults who have endured parental maltreatment may reflect not merely their personal perceptions but also a genuine lack of parental warmth. The maltreatment histories significantly differentiate individuals from those without such experiences, particularly in terms of higher internalizing symptoms, and contribute to distinct pathways leading to internalizing symptoms. It emphasizes that future studies regarding mental health development of emerging adults should consider the profound impact of past maltreatment histories.

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Appendix A
Perceptions of Parents Scales (POPS) (Robbins, 1994)
The College-Student Scale

Please answer the following questions about your mother and your father. If you do not have any contact with one of your parents (for example, your father), but there is another adult of the same gender living with your house (for example, a stepfather) then please answer the questions about that other adult.

Please use the following scale:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	not at all true			somewhat true			very true

1. My mother/father accepts me and likes me as I am.
2. My mother/father clearly conveys her love for me.
3. My mother/father makes me feel very special.
4. My mother/father is often disapproving and unaccepting of me.
5. My mother/father is typically happy to see me.

Appendix B
Parenting Styles and Dimensions Questionnaire (PSDQ) (Nelson et al., 2011; Robinson et al., 1995)

Please rate how often you engage in the different parenting practices listed below. Scores range from "Never" to "Always" on a seven-point scale.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	Never						Always	

1. I am responsive to my child's feelings and needs.
2. I encourage my child to talk about his/her troubles.
3. I give comfort and understanding when my child is upset.
4. I compliment my child.
5. I have warm and intimate times together with my child.

Appendix C
Overparenting of Emerging Adults Scale (OPEAS) (Sherman, 2015)
Emerging Adult Form

The following items are about your mother's/father's current behaviors, and may or may not apply to her/him. Please use the scale below each item to indicate how well it describes your mother/father, in the present time.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
completely			neither agree			completely
disagree			nor disagree			agree

1. My mother/father wants me to depend on her even when I don't need it.
2. My mother/father feels that I can't look after myself without her help.
3. Sometimes my mother/father treats me like I'm still a child.
4. My mother/father worries about whether she is a good mother.
5. My mother/father blames herself when something bad happens to me (e.g., an injury).
6. My mother/father gets very upset when I tell her about bad things that have happened to me. (e.g., A break up with a romantic partner, losing a job).
7. When I have a problem, my mother/father expects me to do what she says.
8. If my mother/father really doesn't care for one of my friends or someone I'm dating she will try to get me to stop seeing him/her.
9. My mother/father likes to do things for me even when I can do them on my own.
10. Sometimes when I am doing a task my mother/father will just take over.
11. My mother/father doesn't like it when I make a change and/or try something new without consulting her first.
12. My mother/father wants me to tell her everything about my friends and close colleagues.
13. My mother/father expects to have input about my job and/or direction in school.
14. It feels like my mother/father doesn't want to hear my opinion about things.
15. My mother/father discourages me from expressing my point of view.

Appendix D
Overparenting of Emerging Adults Scale (OPEAS) (Sherman, 2015)
Parent Form

The following items are about your current behaviors with your child (the child participating in this study), and may or may not apply to you. Please rate how well each item describes you. Scores range from "completely disagree" to "completely agree" on a seven-point scale.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
completely disagree			neither agree nor disagree			completely agree

1. I really like when my child depends on me.
2. I feel that my child needs my help a lot of the time.
3. Sometimes I treat my child a little young for his/her age.
4. I worry about whether I am a good mother.
5. I blame myself when something bad happens to my child (e.g., an injury).
6. I get very upset when my child tells me about bad things that have happened to him/her (e.g., A break up with a romantic partner, losing a job).
7. When my child has a problem, I expect that he/she will do what I say.
8. If I really don't care for one of my child's friends or someone he/she is dating, I will attempt to get my child to stop seeing that person.
9. I like to do things for my child, even things he/she could do alone.
10. Sometimes I have to take over tasks that my child is doing improperly.
11. I dislike when my child makes a change and/or tries something new without consulting me first.
12. I want my child to tell me everything about his/her friends and close colleagues.
13. I expect to have input about my child's job/direction in school.
14. I ask my child to contribute his/her opinion.
15. I tend to prefer when my child keeps his/her point of view to him/herself.

Appendix E
Enright Forgiveness Inventory (EFI-30) (Enright et al., 2021)

We ask you now to think of one experience of your mother/father hurting you **unfairly** and **deeply**. For a few moments, visualize in your mind the events of that interaction. Try to see the person and try to experience what happened.

How long ago was the offense? (Please write in the number of days or weeks, etc.)

_____days ago

_____months ago

_____weeks ago

_____years ago

Please briefly describe what happened when this person hurt you:

Now, please answer a series of questions about your current attitude toward this person. We do **not** want your rating of past attitudes, but your ratings of attitudes **right now**. All responses are confidential so please answer honestly. Thank you.

This set of items deals with your current **feelings** or **emotions** right now toward the person. Try to assess your actual **feeling** for the person on each item. For each item please check the appropriate number matching your level of agreement that **best** describes your current feeling. I feel ___ toward him/her. (Place each word in the blank when answering each item.)

I feel	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
warm	1	2	3	4	5	6
tender	1	2	3	4	5	6
unloving	1	2	3	4	5	6
repulsed	1	2	3	4	5	6
cold	1	2	3	4	5	6
dislike	1	2	3	4	5	6
caring	1	2	3	4	5	6
affection	1	2	3	4	5	6
friendly	1	2	3	4	5	6
disgust	1	2	3	4	5	6

This set of items deals with your current **behavior** toward the person. Consider how you **do act** or **would act** toward the person in answering the questions. For each item, please check the appropriate number matching your level of agreement that **best** describes your current behavior or probable behavior.

Regarding this person, I do or would _____. (Place each word or phrase in the blank when answering each item.)

I feel	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
show friendship	1	2	3	4	5	6
avoid	1	2	3	4	5	6
ignore	1	2	3	4	5	6
neglect	1	2	3	4	5	6
not attend to him/her	1	2	3	4	5	6

lend him/her a hand	1	2	3	4	5	6
establish good relations with him/her	1	2	3	4	5	6
stay away	1	2	3	4	5	6
do a favor	1	2	3	4	5	6
aid him/her when in trouble	1	2	3	4	5	6

This set of items deals with how you currently **think** about the person. Think about the kinds of thoughts that occupy your **mind** right **now** regarding this particular person. For each item please check the appropriate number matching your level of agreement that **best** describes your current thinking.

I think he/she ____.(Place each word or phrase in the blank when answering each item.)

I feel	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
horrible	1	2	3	4	5	6
of good quality	1	2	3	4	5	6
dreadful	1	2	3	4	5	6
worthless	1	2	3	4	5	6
a good person	1	2	3	4	5	6
a bad person	1	2	3	4	5	6
Regarding this person, I…	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
wish him/her well	1	2	3	4	5	6
disapprove of him/her	1	2	3	4	5	6
think favorably of him/her	1	2	3	4	5	6
hope he/she succeeds	1	2	3	4	5	6

We have one final question.

To what extent have you forgiven the person you rated on this *Attitude Scale*?

Not at all		In progress		Complete forgiveness
1	2	3	4	5

Appendix F
Depression Anxiety Stress Scales (DASS-21) (Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995)
Please read each statement and choose a number 0, 1, 2, or 3 which indicates how much the statement applied to you over the past week. There are no right or wrong answers. Do not spend too much time on any statement.
The rating scale is as follows:
0 Did not apply to me at all
1 Applied to me to some degree, or some of the time
2 Applied to me to a considerable degree, or a good part of time
3 Applied to me very much, or most of the time

1. I was intolerant of anything that kept me from getting on with what I was doing
2. I felt I was rather touchy
3. I found it difficult to relax
4. I found myself getting agitated
5. I felt that I was using a lot of nervous energy
6. I found that it hard to wind down
7. I tended to over-react to situations
8. I felt that life was meaningless
9. I felt that I had nothing to look forward to
10. I couldn't seem to experience any positive feeling at all
11. I was unable to become enthusiastic about anything
12. I felt that I wasn't worth much as a person
13. I felt down-hearted and blue
14. I found it difficult to work up the initiative to do things
15. I perspired noticeably (e.g., hands sweaty) in the absence of physical exertion
16. I experienced breathing difficulty (e.g., excessively rapid breathing, breathlessness in the absence of physical exertion)
17. I experienced trembling (e.g., in the hands)
18. I felt I was close to panic
19. I felt scared without any good reason
20. I was worried about situations in which I might panic and make a fool of myself
21. I was aware of dryness of my mouth

Appendix G
Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding Short Form (BIDR-16) (Hart et al., 2015)
Using the scale below as a guide, write a number beside each statement to indicate how true it is.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
not true			somewhat			very true

1. I have not always been honest with myself.
2. I always know why I like things.
3. It's hard for me to shut off a disturbing thought.
4. I never regret my decisions.
5. I sometimes lose out on things because I can't make up my mind soon enough.
6. I am a completely rational person.
7. I am very confident of my judgments
8. I have sometimes doubted my ability as a lover.
9. I sometimes tell lies if I have to.
10. I never cover up my mistakes.
11. There have been occasions when I have taken advantage of someone.
12. I sometimes try to get even rather than forgive and forget.
13. I have said something bad about a friend behind his/her back.
14. When I hear people talking privately, I avoid listening.
15. I never take things that don't belong to me.
16. I don't gossip about other people's business.