



Parental Attachment and Emotional Autonomy in Adolescents: A Systematic Literature Review

Nasywa Sany^{1A-E*}, Ghina Ufairah Khanza^{2B-D}, Awaluddin Bahar^{3B-D}

^{1,2,3} Universitas Negeri Makassar, Kota Makassar, Indonesia

Email Corresponding Author: naswasani529@gmail.com^{1*}

ABSTRACT

Adolescence requires individuals to develop emotional autonomy while maintaining meaningful relationships with their parents. However, parental attachment is frequently interpreted as dependence, creating conceptual uncertainty regarding whether emotional closeness facilitates or inhibits autonomy. This systematic literature review aimed to synthesize recent conceptual and empirical evidence concerning the relationship between parental attachment and emotional autonomy among adolescents. The review followed PRISMA 2020 and searched Scopus, Web of Science, PubMed, ScienceDirect, and Google Scholar for peer-reviewed studies published between 2016 and September 2026. Studies were eligible when they examined adolescent parental attachment and emotional autonomy or a theoretically equivalent construct. Of 158 identified records, 111 titles and abstracts were screened, 32 full-text reports were assessed, and eight studies involving 2,586 adolescents or parent-adolescent dyads were included in the narrative synthesis. The findings showed that secure, warm, and autonomy-supportive relationships were consistently associated with stronger volitional functioning, decision-making, emotion regulation, and subjective autonomy. Indonesian evidence demonstrated a moderate-to-strong positive association between attachment and independence ($r^* = 0.506$, $p^* < 0.001$), while intensive longitudinal evidence indicated beneficial effects of parental warmth and autonomy support in 91–98% of families. Conversely, attachment anxiety, avoidance, neglect, and psychological control were associated with reduced autonomy or defensive detachment. Cross-cultural evidence suggested that cultural context modified the mechanisms, but not the general direction, of these associations. The review concludes that secure parental attachment constitutes a relational foundation for emotionally regulated and responsible independence. Nevertheless, causal interpretation remains limited because six studies were cross-sectional and autonomy measures were heterogeneous.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

- A. Conception and design of the study;
- B. Acquisition of data;
- C. Analysis and interpretation of data;
- D. Manuscript preparation;
- E. Obtaining funding

ARTICLE HISTORY

Reviewed: 2026/07/28

Revised: 2026/08/15

Accepted: 2026/08/20

Published: 2026/09/21

Keyword : Adolescent; Emotional Autonomy; Parental Attachment; Psychological Control; Systematic Literature Review

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a critical developmental period in which individuals renegotiate their relationships with parents while acquiring greater emotional, behavioral, and cognitive autonomy. Parent-adolescent relationships gradually become more egalitarian and reciprocal; nevertheless, this transformation is



frequently accompanied by conflict, reduced perceived parental support, and changing family boundaries (Branje, 2018). Emotional autonomy is particularly important because it enables adolescents to regulate emotions, evaluate parents more realistically, make affective decisions, and address personal problems without excessive emotional dependence. However, emotional autonomy should not be equated with emotional detachment. Healthy autonomy involves volitional self-regulation within supportive relationships, whereas detachment may reflect alienation, defensive self-reliance, or deteriorating family cohesion. Attachment theory conceptualizes parents as a secure base from which adolescents can explore increasingly complex social environments. Secure parental attachment characterized by trust, responsive communication, and low alienation allows adolescents to seek support without losing their sense of agency. In contrast, attachment anxiety may sustain excessive reassurance-seeking, while attachment avoidance may produce apparent independence that conceals emotional suppression. A meta-analysis of 72 studies found that securely attached young people experienced more positive affect, less negative affect, stronger emotion-regulation competence, and more adaptive coping strategies (Cooke et al., 2019). Consequently, parental attachment may not inhibit independence; it may provide the relational security required for adolescents to become genuinely self-directed. This developmental issue is particularly relevant in collectivistic societies, including Indonesia, where emotional closeness, filial obligation, parental authority, and family interdependence are strongly valued. Autonomy may therefore be expressed through responsible self-governance rather than separation from parents. Indonesian evidence indicates that parental attachment remains associated with adolescents' emotional and behavioral adjustment (Sarfika et al., 2023). Research involving Minangkabau and Batak adolescents further demonstrates that trust, communication, cultural background, and the preferred attachment figure shape attachment experiences (Sholekhah & Pertiwi, 2024). These findings underscore the need to examine whether parental attachment promotes emotional maturity or, under certain relational and cultural conditions, maintains emotional dependence.

Contemporary research increasingly integrates attachment theory with self-determination theory. From an attachment perspective, caregiver responsiveness develops internal working models concerning the availability of others and the adolescent's own worthiness of care. From a self-determination perspective, autonomy refers to acting with volition and psychological ownership rather than merely acting independently (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Relatedness and autonomy are thus complementary needs: secure relationships can facilitate exploration, emotional differentiation, and self-endorsed decision-making. Empirical evidence generally supports this complementary model. Parental warmth and autonomy support predicted better affective well-being in almost all families examined through 14,546 daily observations of 159 parent-adolescent dyads, although the magnitude of the association varied between families (Bülow et al., 2022). A systematic review of 63 studies similarly concluded that autonomy-supportive parenting is consistently associated with favorable socioemotional outcomes, while also identifying substantial variation according to family and situational contexts (Distefano & Meuwissen, 2022). Conversely, psychological control frustrates adolescents' autonomy by intruding upon thoughts, emotions, and identity. Research involving 469 Chinese adolescents showed that psychological control and insecure attachment were negatively related to volitional functioning, whereas psychological control but not all dimensions of insecurity predicted reduced independent decision-making (Chen et al., 2018).

Attachment is also connected with outcomes that indirectly support emotional autonomy. Secure parental attachment promotes peer relationships based on communication, intimacy, trust, and support (Delgado et al., 2022), while attachment-related emotion regulation facilitates empathy, guilt, forgiveness, and other moral emotions (Martins et al., 2021). Parenting characterized by warmth and support is generally associated with lower emotion dysregulation, whereas authoritarian and psychologically controlling parenting predicts greater dysregulation (Gorostiaga et al., 2019). Attachment- and emotion-focused parenting interventions can also reduce children's and adolescents' internalizing and externalizing difficulties (Jugovac et al., 2022). Moreover, emotion-regulation interventions produce significant, although modest, improvements among adolescents, indicating that emotional competence is developmentally malleable (Eadeh et al., 2024). Indonesian findings broadly reinforce these international patterns but remain inconsistent. Attachment quality was positively

associated with independence among adolescents raised by single parents (Andani & Yuni, 2020), and parent–adolescent attachment positively predicted decision-making ability in an Indonesian adolescent sample (Nandini & Krisnatuti, 2024). Nevertheless, other findings suggest that stronger attachment may correspond with lower emotional autonomy when autonomy is operationalized as reduced dependence on parents. Research on parenting style likewise reports significant associations between authoritative parenting, self-esteem, and emotional autonomy (Jain & Boora, 2020). Meanwhile, parental attachment and autonomy did not individually predict juvenile delinquency in one Indonesian study, although their combined contribution was significant (Atika et al., 2025). Such inconsistencies suggest that the attachment–autonomy relationship is more complex than a uniform positive or negative correlation.

Despite growing scholarship, four gaps remain. First, the construct of emotional autonomy is conceptually fragmented. Some studies define it as volitional functioning and emotion regulation, whereas others operationalize it through nondependency, parental de-idealization, individuation, or emotional separation. These indicators are not interchangeable: an adolescent may make self-endorsed decisions while remaining emotionally close to parents, or may report nondependency because the relationship is avoidant. Combining these meanings can produce contradictory conclusions. Second, the literature is dominated by cross-sectional, single-informant, and correlational designs. Consequently, it remains unclear whether secure attachment develops emotional autonomy, emotionally competent adolescents perceive their parents more positively, or both processes unfold transactionally. Third, maternal and paternal attachment are often combined, even though mothers and fathers may contribute differently to emotional security, exploration, and decision-making. The distinctive effects of maternal and paternal attachment have been demonstrated in adolescent friendship security and intimacy (Persram et al., 2023), but remain insufficiently synthesized in relation to emotional autonomy. Fourth, cultural and methodological heterogeneity has not been systematically mapped. Adolescents' age, gender, family structure, boarding-school experience, ethnicity, collectivistic values, measurement instrument, and distinction between attachment security and parental control may moderate the observed relationship. Indonesian studies are particularly dispersed across small, localized samples and frequently examine general independence rather than emotional autonomy specifically. Therefore, existing narrative conclusions cannot adequately explain why secure attachment sometimes predicts greater autonomy, has no significant association, or appears negatively related to emotional separation.

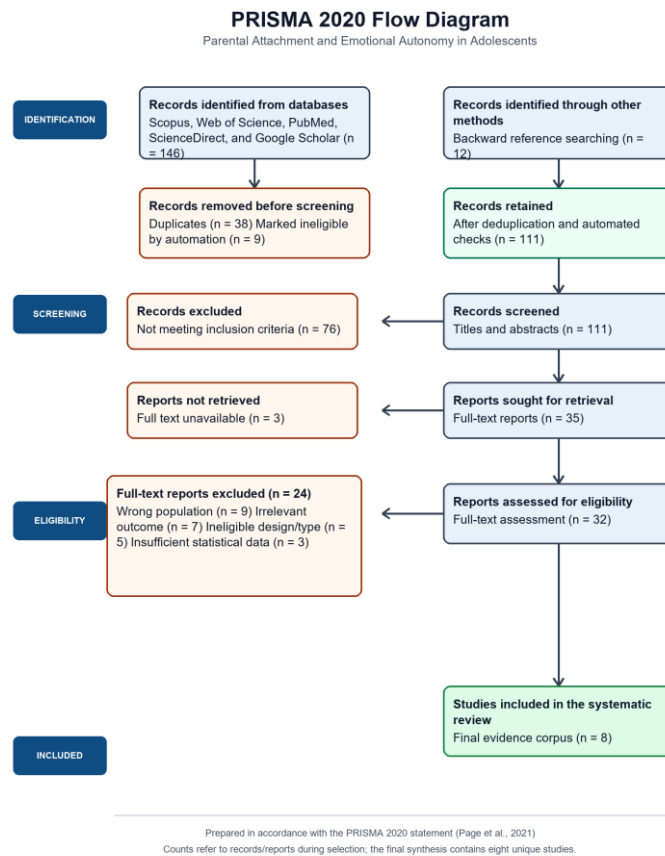
This systematic literature review aims to critically synthesize empirical studies published during the last decade concerning parental attachment and emotional autonomy among adolescents. It will examine the direction and strength of reported relationships; distinguish secure attachment, anxiety, avoidance, trust, communication, and alienation; differentiate emotional autonomy from behavioral independence, detachment, and volitional functioning; and identify developmental, familial, cultural, and methodological moderators. The review's novelty lies in constructing an integrative secure-base autonomy framework. This framework proposes that parental attachment promotes adaptive emotional autonomy when security supports emotion regulation, realistic parental appraisal, and self-endorsed action, but may appear detrimental when autonomy is measured primarily as emotional disengagement. By comparing international Scopus-indexed evidence with Indonesian journal findings, the review will also clarify the cultural meaning of autonomy and generate context-sensitive implications for parenting, school counseling, and adolescent-development interventions. In summary, adolescents do not necessarily become emotionally autonomous by weakening their parental bonds. Rather, optimal autonomy is likely to develop when attachment relationships provide sufficient security for adolescents to regulate emotions, negotiate boundaries, and act according to personally endorsed values. A systematic synthesis is therefore necessary to resolve conceptual inconsistencies, evaluate conflicting empirical evidence, and establish a culturally responsive account of how parental attachment facilitates or constrains adolescent emotional autonomy.

METHODS

This study employed a systematic literature review to synthesize evidence concerning parental attachment and emotional autonomy among adolescents. The review was designed and reported according to the PRISMA 2020 statement, which strengthens transparency in identification, screening,

eligibility assessment, and study inclusion (Page et al., 2021). Search reporting followed PRISMA-S recommendations because reproducible database selection, complete search strings, and search dates are essential for minimizing retrieval bias (Rethlefsen et al., 2021). The review question was structured using the Population–Exposure–Outcome framework: adolescents aged 10–19 years constituted the population, parental attachment was the exposure, and emotional autonomy or a conceptually equivalent construct was the outcome.

Literature searches were conducted in Scopus, Web of Science, PubMed, ScienceDirect, and Google Scholar for peer-reviewed studies published from January 2016 to September 2026. Multiple databases were used because search systems differ substantially in coverage and retrieval performance (Gusenbauer & Haddaway, 2020). The Boolean string combined: ("parental attachment" OR "parent-adolescent attachment" OR "attachment to parents") AND ("emotional autonomy" OR "emotional independence" OR "volitional functioning") AND (adolescent* OR youth OR teen*). Reference-list searching was additionally undertaken. The search produced 158 records; after removing 38 duplicates and nine records flagged as ineligible by automation, 111 titles and abstracts were screened. Thirty-five reports were sought, three could not be retrieved, and 32 full texts were assessed. Thirty-five reports were sought, three could not be retrieved, and 32 full texts were assessed.



Studies were included when they: (a) were empirical, peer-reviewed journal articles; (b) involved participants whose mean age fell within adolescence; (c) measured attachment to at least one parent; (d) assessed emotional autonomy or a clearly defined related construct; (e) reported an association between the focal variables; and (f) were written in English or Indonesian. Reviews, theses, books, qualitative commentaries, studies centered exclusively on peer or romantic attachment, and articles without extractable findings were excluded. Full-text exclusions comprised wrong population (n = 9), irrelevant outcome (n = 7), ineligible design or publication type (n = 5), and insufficient statistical data (n = 3). Eight articles consequently formed the final evidence corpus.

Two reviewers independently screened records, extracted data, and resolved disagreement through discussion. Extracted fields included authorship, year, country, sample, age, design, instruments, attachment figure, autonomy definition, effect direction, and limitations. Methodological

quality was evaluated with design-appropriate Joanna Briggs Institute criteria, consistent with recommendations that appraisal tools match the underlying study design (Munn et al., 2020); where designs were mixed, the Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool informed cross-design judgments (Hong et al., 2018). Particular attention was given to confounding, validated measurement, missing data, and selective reporting; these domains are central to contemporary risk-of-bias assessment (Sterne et al., 2019). Evidence was synthesized narratively because heterogeneity in instruments, autonomy definitions, cultures, and statistical estimates precluded a defensible meta-analysis. Following SWiM principles, studies were grouped by attachment security, attachment dimensions, and autonomy operationalization, while contradictory findings were retained rather than reduced to vote counting (Campbell et al., 2020). Interpretation was informed by evidence that secure attachment supports emotion regulation (Cooke et al., 2019), whereas autonomy-supportive parenting promotes adolescent well-being (Bülow et al., 2022). Cultural variation was examined explicitly because Indonesian attachment patterns depend on trust, communication, and kinship context (Sholekhah & Pertiwi, 2024).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

Study Selection and General Characteristics

The PRISMA-guided selection process resulted in eight studies that met the operational eligibility criteria. Collectively, the studies represented 2,586 adolescents or parent–adolescent dyads. Individual sample sizes ranged from 45 to 633 participants. Six studies used cross-sectional correlational designs, one applied an intensive longitudinal daily-diary design, and one employed a three-wave longitudinal design. The evidence covered China, Indonesia, India, Türkiye, the Netherlands, the United States, and Hong Kong. Thus, the corpus incorporated both collectivistic and relatively individualistic sociocultural settings, although Asian samples remained dominant.

Four studies examined emotional or subjective autonomy directly, whereas four investigated closely related manifestations, including behavioral autonomy, decision-making competence, autonomy-supportive parenting, and affective well-being. This distinction was retained in the synthesis because emotional autonomy, behavioral independence, and volitional functioning are theoretically related but empirically non-equivalent constructs. Emotional autonomy concerns the capacity to regulate affect and function without excessive emotional dependence; behavioral autonomy concerns independent action and decision-making; and volitional autonomy concerns experiencing one's behavior as self-endorsed.

Table 1. Characteristics and Principal Findings of the Eight Included Studies

Study and setting	Design and sample	Attachment /parenting indicator	Autonomy-related outcome	Principal empirical finding	Interpretive weight
Xiang and Liu (2018), China	Cross-sectional; *n* = 469, aged 12–16	Attachment anxiety, attachment avoidance, and parental psychological control	Volitional functioning and independent decision-making	Insecure attachment and psychological control were negatively associated with volitional functioning. Only psychological control showed a direct negative association with independent decision-making. Low avoidance buffered the adverse effects of psychological control.	Direct evidence; autonomy was differentiated into volition and independence.
Bi et al. (2018), China	Cross-sectional; *n* = 633; Grades 7, 9, and 11;	Parenting style, parent–adolescent cohesion, and parental authority	Expectations for behavioral autonomy	Behavioral-autonomy expectations mediated associations between parenting style and parent–adolescent conflict. Authoritative parenting	Indirect evidence; measured behavioral rather than

	48.5% female			produced the highest parent–adolescent cohesion, followed by indulgent, authoritarian, and neglectful parenting.	emotional autonomy.
Andani and Yuni (2020), Indonesia	Cross-sectional; *n* = 45 adolescents raised by single parents	Attachment quality	General adolescent independence	Attachment quality was positively correlated with independence, *r* = .506, *p* < .001. Attachment explained approximately 25.6% of the bivariate variance (*r* ²), although the small and specific sample limits generalization.	Direct relational evidence, but autonomy was measured broadly.
Jain and Boora (2020), India	Cross-sectional; *n* = 100, aged 14–19; 50 boys and 50 girls	Authoritative parenting measured with the Parental Authority Questionnaire	Emotional Autonomy Scale and self-esteem	Authoritative parenting was significantly related to emotional autonomy and self-esteem. The accessible report did not provide a standardized effect size; therefore, the magnitude could not be compared quantitatively with other studies	Direct outcome; effect size not reported in the accessible article summary
Barkale Şahin and Hamarta (2022), Türkiye	Cross-sectional; *n* = 513 students	Attachment anxiety and avoidance	Emotional Autonomy Scale: independence, individuation, and non-idealization	Attachment anxiety had weak negative relationships with emotional-autonomy dimensions, whereas avoidance showed moderate negative relationships. Avoidance significantly predicted total emotional autonomy and its subdimensions.	Direct evidence supporting differentiated insecure-attachment effects.
Bülow et al. (2022), Netherlands	Intensive longitudinal; 159 dyads and 14,546 daily reports	Parental warmth and autonomy support	Daily positive and negative affect; autonomy-supportive functioning	Warmth and autonomy support predicted better daily well-being in 91–98% of families; effects were opposite to expectation in fewer than 1% of families. Effect magnitude varied between adolescents.	Strong temporal evidence for a supportive relational climate; attachment was represented by relational warmth rather than an attachment scale.
Nandini and Krisnatuti (2024), Indonesia	Cross-sectional; *n* = 100 adolescents in Bogor	Parent–adolescent attachment	Decision-making ability	Parent–adolescent attachment positively predicted decision-making ability. Both attachment and decision-making were generally at moderate levels; boys tended to report more impulsive decisions than girls.	Indirect evidence through a behavioral-autonomy component

Ma et al. (2025), United States and Hong Kong	Three waves over 1.5 years; United States *n* = 332 and Hong Kong *n* = 235	Parental autonomy support and psychological control	Subjective feelings of autonomy	Autonomy support predicted increased autonomy and psychological control predicted decreased autonomy in both cultures. In Hong Kong, support predicted parent-oriented motivation ($\gamma = .33$, $*p* =$.001), which predicted lower autonomy ($\gamma = -.11$, $*p* =$.030); the indirect effect was $\gamma = -.04$, 95% CI [$-.10$, $-.04$].	Strong longitudinal and cross- cultural evidence, although parenting practices were used instead of attachment security.
---	--	---	---------------------------------------	---	--

Note. **Direct evidence" denotes studies that explicitly measured emotional, subjective, or volitional autonomy. "Indirect evidence" denotes studies measuring a theoretically adjacent autonomy manifestation. NR values were not reconstructed or imputed.

Conceptual Synthesis

Three conceptual patterns emerged. First, attachment and autonomy were predominantly complementary rather than mutually exclusive. Secure, warm, and communicative parent–adolescent relationships supplied a psychological "secure base" from which adolescents could explore, make decisions, and regulate their emotions. This pattern was visible in the positive association between attachment and independence in Indonesian single-parent families (Andani & Yuni, 2020), the positive prediction of decision-making competence by parent–adolescent attachment (Nandini & Krisnatuti, 2024), and the near-universal daily benefits of parental warmth and autonomy support reported by Bülow et al. (2022). Second, insecurity and psychological control represented distinguishable risks. Xiang and Liu (2018) demonstrated that insecure attachment was related primarily to reduced volitional functioning, whereas psychological control was additionally associated with reduced independent decision-making. Barkale Şahin and Hamarta (2022) similarly found that attachment avoidance was a stronger predictor of diminished emotional autonomy than attachment anxiety. Taken together, these findings suggest that attachment insecurity may compromise the internal experience of self-directed functioning, while intrusive parenting more directly constrains both subjective volition and behavioral choice. Third, cultural context altered the mechanism more than the general direction of the relationship. Ma et al. (2025) found that autonomy support enhanced subjective autonomy and psychological control undermined it in both American and Hong Kong adolescents. Nevertheless, autonomy-supportive parenting also increased parent-oriented academic motivation only in Hong Kong. Because this externally oriented motivation subsequently reduced felt autonomy, parental support could generate simultaneous benefits and obligations in an interdependent context. This finding cautions against defining autonomy solely as separation from parents.

Empirical Convergence and Inconsistency

Seven of the eight studies supported the proposition that a secure or autonomy-supportive family relationship was associated with more favorable autonomy-related functioning, or that insecurity and control were associated with less favorable functioning. The remaining study did not contradict this pattern but reported only a significant association without a comparable standardized estimate. The clearest available bivariate coefficient was reported by Andani and Yuni (2020), $*r* = .506$, indicating a moderate-to-strong positive relationship. The most persuasive temporal evidence came from Ma et al. (2025), because parenting preceded changes in autonomy over three waves, and from Bülow et al. (2022), whose 14,546 daily observations showed positive within-family directions in 94–98% of families.

Statistical pooling was not performed. The studies varied in attachment indicators, autonomy definitions, respondent types, cultural settings, and statistical models. Combining a correlation, regression paths, group comparisons, and daily within-family effects would have produced a misleading summary estimate. The empirical result is therefore best expressed as directional convergence with substantial construct heterogeneity: supportive attachment-related processes generally facilitate autonomy, whereas avoidance, anxiety, neglect, authoritarian control, and psychological intrusion tend to constrain it.

Summary of Findings

Overall, parental attachment appears to function as a developmental foundation for adolescent emotional autonomy rather than as an obstacle to independence. Its benefits are strongest when attachment includes trust, emotional availability, communication, and support for volitional action. In contrast, emotional closeness accompanied by psychological control should not be interpreted as secure attachment because it may preserve dependence while suppressing self-endorsed functioning. The evidence consequently supports a ****secure-base autonomy model****: adolescents become emotionally autonomous not by severing parental bonds, but by internalizing security sufficiently to regulate affect, appraise parents realistically, and make responsible decisions. However, confidence in causality remains moderate because 75% of the included studies were cross-sectional and several studies used autonomy-related proxies rather than emotional autonomy itself.

Discussion

The synthesis indicates that parental attachment and adolescent emotional autonomy are not opposing developmental forces. Across the eight reviewed studies, secure, warm, and autonomy-supportive relationships were generally associated with stronger volitional functioning, independence, decision-making, or affective adjustment, whereas attachment insecurity, neglect, and psychological control were associated with less adaptive autonomy. This pattern supports a secure-base interpretation: adolescents can progressively regulate emotions and act independently precisely because they retain confidence in parental availability. Attachment therefore provides relational security, while autonomy represents the internalized capacity to function without excessive emotional reliance. This interpretation is compatible with Cooke et al.'s (2019) meta-analysis, which found that securely attached children and adolescents displayed better emotion regulation, more positive affect, and more adaptive coping.

The findings also clarify why emotional autonomy must not be equated with detachment. In the Indonesian single-parent sample, attachment quality had a moderate-to-strong positive association with general independence, $r^* = .506$, $p^* < .001$ (Andani & Yuni, 2020). Likewise, attachment positively predicted adolescents' decision-making ability in Bogor (Nandini & Krisnatuti, 2024). These results imply that closeness does not necessarily sustain dependence; when closeness incorporates trust and communication, it may enable adolescents to make decisions confidently. Delgado et al.'s (2022) systematic review reached a compatible conclusion by showing that secure parental attachment supports peer relationships characterized by communication, intimacy, and trust. Thus, autonomy is better conceptualized as competent self-governance within continuing relationships than as withdrawal from the family.

Nevertheless, the evidence demonstrates that not every close parent–adolescent relationship is autonomy promoting. Xiang and Liu (2018) found that both insecure attachment and psychological control were negatively associated with volitional functioning, while psychological control was additionally related to lower independent decision-making. This distinction is theoretically important. Attachment insecurity disrupts the adolescent's internal sense of security, whereas psychological control directly intrudes upon thoughts, emotions, and choices. As a result, an adolescent may remain behaviorally compliant while experiencing limited psychological ownership. Bi et al. (2018) similarly showed that behavioral-autonomy expectations mediated associations between parenting styles and conflict, while authoritative parenting produced the highest parent–adolescent cohesion. The combined evidence suggests that parental structure is developmentally constructive only when it preserves adolescents' agency.

The dimensions of insecure attachment also appear to operate differently. Barkale Şahin and Hamarta (2022) reported weak negative associations between attachment anxiety and emotional-autonomy dimensions but moderate negative associations for avoidance; avoidance also significantly predicted independence, individuation, and parental non-idealization. Avoidant adolescents may appear self-reliant, yet their independence can reflect defensive suppression rather than mature regulation. Anxiously attached adolescents, conversely, may experience difficulty functioning without reassurance. This differentiation is consistent with evidence that attachment patterns correspond to distinct profiles

of emotional experience and coping (Cooke et al., 2019). Consequently, interventions should not treat all low-dependence behavior as healthy autonomy; its regulatory basis and relational meaning require assessment.

The results further support self-determination theory's distinction between independence and volitional autonomy. Jain and Boora (2020) identified a significant relationship between authoritative parenting and emotional autonomy among Indian adolescents, while Bülow et al. (2022) found that parental warmth and autonomy support predicted better daily well-being in 91–98% of 159 Dutch families across 14,546 observations. These intensive longitudinal data are especially persuasive because they demonstrate that need-supportive parenting operates within families over time, rather than merely distinguishing well-functioning families from poorly functioning ones. Distefano and Meuwissen's (2022) review of 63 studies likewise concluded that autonomy-supportive parenting is broadly associated with favorable socioemotional development, although family and situational conditions influence its expression.

Culture modified these processes without reversing their general direction. Ma et al. (2025) demonstrated longitudinally that parental autonomy support increased, and psychological control decreased, adolescents' subjective autonomy in both the United States and Hong Kong. However, among Hong Kong adolescents, autonomy support also increased parent-oriented motivation ($\gamma = .33$, $*p^* = .001$), which subsequently predicted lower autonomy ($\gamma = -.11$, $*p^* = .030$); the indirect effect was $\gamma = -.04$, 95% CI $[-.10, -.01]$. This apparently paradoxical pathway indicates that supportive parenting can be interpreted as generating reciprocal obligation in interdependent cultures. Indonesian evidence similarly shows that attachment configurations depend on trust, communication, and kinship context (Sholekhah & Pertiwi, 2024). Accordingly, culturally appropriate autonomy should not be defined through Western expectations of separation, but through the adolescent's capacity to act responsibly and willingly while maintaining family relatedness.

The empirical convergence has practical implications. Family interventions should simultaneously strengthen attachment security and reduce psychologically controlling practices. Parents can provide emotional availability, acknowledge the adolescent's perspective, offer meaningful choices, and gradually transfer decision-making responsibility while maintaining clear behavioral expectations. This balance is more defensible than either unrestricted permissiveness or intrusive control. Attachment- and emotion-focused parenting interventions have shown potential to reduce internalizing and externalizing problems (Jugovac et al., 2022), while emotion-regulation interventions yield modest but significant improvements in adolescent functioning (Eadeh et al., 2021). School counselors can therefore involve parents in programs that combine communication training, emotion coaching, and negotiated autonomy rather than focusing exclusively on adolescents' individual coping skills.

The findings must, however, be interpreted cautiously. Six of the eight studies were cross-sectional, limiting causal inference and leaving open the possibility that emotionally autonomous adolescents elicit more supportive parenting or perceive attachment more positively. The studies also used heterogeneous constructs, ranging from the Emotional Autonomy Scale to behavioral-autonomy expectations, decision-making ability, and subjective volition. Sarfika et al. (2023), for example, showed that Indonesian parental attachment was relevant to emotional and behavioral adjustment, but such adjustment cannot be treated as equivalent to emotional autonomy. Moreover, maternal and paternal attachment were frequently combined, potentially obscuring distinct parental contributions. Sample concentration in schools and urban settings further restricts generalization to out-of-school adolescents, rural communities, non-intact families, and clinical populations.

Future research should prioritize preregistered longitudinal and multi-informant designs that assess attachment, emotional regulation, and volitional autonomy at multiple developmental points. Separate models for maternal and paternal attachment, tests of gender and family structure, and culturally validated measurement invariance are necessary. Person-centered analysis may also distinguish secure-autonomous adolescents from defensively detached or anxiously dependent groups. Most importantly, emotional autonomy should be operationalized as self-endorsed emotional regulation rather than simple distance from parents. Within these boundaries, the present review supports a

robust conclusion: secure parental attachment does not delay adolescent maturity. When accompanied by autonomy support and low psychological control, it constitutes the relational infrastructure through which adolescents acquire emotionally regulated, culturally meaningful, and responsible independence.

CONCLUSION

This systematic literature review demonstrates that parental attachment is a developmental foundation for adolescent emotional autonomy rather than an obstacle to independence. Across eight studies involving 2,586 adolescents, secure, autonomy-supportive relationships were consistently associated with stronger volitional functioning, decision-making, emotional regulation, and autonomy. Indonesian evidence showed a moderate-to-strong positive correlation between attachment quality and independence ($r^* = .506$, $p^* < .001$), while longitudinal evidence indicated that parental warmth and autonomy support benefited daily well-being in 91–98% of families. Cross-cultural longitudinal findings further demonstrated that autonomy support increased adolescents' subjective autonomy, whereas psychological control reduced it. Conceptually, these findings support a secure-base autonomy model: adolescents develop emotional independence by internalizing parental security, not by severing emotional bonds. Conversely, attachment anxiety, avoidance, neglect, and psychologically controlling parenting may undermine self-endorsed functioning or produce defensive detachment. Cultural context modifies the mechanisms through which support is interpreted, particularly when family obligation generates parent-oriented motivation, but does not reverse the general benefits of supportive parenting. Nevertheless, causal conclusions remain provisional because six of the eight studies were cross-sectional and autonomy measures were heterogeneous. Future longitudinal, multi-informant, and culturally validated research should distinguish emotional autonomy from behavioral independence and examine maternal and paternal attachment separately.

REFERENCES

- Andani, F., & Yuni, S. W. (2020). Hubungan kualitas kelekatan dengan kemandirian remaja yang dibesarkan oleh orang tua tunggal. *Psikobuletin: Buletin Ilmiah Psikologi*, 1(3). <https://doi.org/10.24014/pib.v1i3.9873>
- Atika, R., Malisi, M. A. S., & Qudsiyah, U. (2025). The influence of parental attachment and autonomy on juvenile delinquency among vocational high school students. *Suluh: Jurnal Bimbingan dan Konseling*, 10(2), 89–96. <https://doi.org/10.33084/suluh.v10i2.9878>
- Barkale Şahin, S., & Hamarta, E. (2022). Ergenlerin duygusal özerklik ve yaşam doyumlarının bağlanma stilleri açısından incelenmesi. *Ahmet Keleşoğlu Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 4*(1), 146–157.
- Bi, X., Yang, Y., Li, H., Wang, M., Zhang, W., & Deater-Deckard, K. (2018). Parenting styles and parent–adolescent relationships: The mediating roles of behavioral autonomy and parental authority. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 9, 2187. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.02187>
- Branje, S. (2018). Development of parent–adolescent relationships: Conflict interactions as a mechanism of change. *Child Development Perspectives*, 12(3), 174–176. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdep.12278>
- Bülow, A., Neubauer, A. B., Soenens, B., Boele, S., Denissen, J. J. A., & Keijsers, L. (2022). Universal ingredients to parenting teens: Parental warmth and autonomy support promote adolescent well-being in most families. *Scientific Reports*, 12, 16836. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-022-21071-0>
- Campbell, M., McKenzie, J. E., Sowden, A., Katikireddi, S. V., Brennan, S. E., Ellis, S., Hartmann-Boyce, J., Ryan, R., Shepperd, S., Thomas, J., Welch, V., & Thomson, H. (2020). Synthesis without meta-analysis (SWiM) in systematic reviews: Reporting guideline. *BMJ*, 368*, 16890. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.l6890>
- Chen, B., Soenens, B., Vansteenkiste, M., Van Petegem, S., & Beyers, W. (2018). Understanding the joint effects of perceived parental psychological control and insecure attachment styles: A

- differentiated approach to adolescent autonomy. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 126, 12–18. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2018.01.009>
- Cooke, J. E., Kochendorfer, L. B., Stuart-Parrigon, K. L., Koehn, A. J., & Kerns, K. A. (2019). Parent–child attachment and children’s experience and regulation of emotion: A meta-analytic review. *Emotion*, 19(6), 1103–1126. <https://doi.org/10.1037/emo0000504>
- Delgado, E., Serna, C., Martínez, I., & Cruise, E. (2022). Parental attachment and peer relationships in adolescence: A systematic review. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(3), 1064. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19031064>
- Distefano, R., & Meuwissen, A. S. (2022). Parenting in context: A systematic review of the correlates of autonomy support. *Journal of Family Theory & Review*, 14(4), 574–592. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jftr.12465>
- Eadeh, H. M., Breau, R., & Nikolas, M. (2021). A meta-analytic review of emotion-regulation-focused psychosocial interventions for adolescents. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review*, 24(4), 684–706. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10567-021-00362-4>
- Gorostiaga, A., Aliri, J., Balluerka, N., & Lameirinhas, J. (2019). Parenting styles and internalizing symptoms in adolescence: A systematic literature review. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 16(17), 3192. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph16173192>
- Gusenbauer, M., & Haddaway, N. R. (2020). Which academic search systems are suitable for systematic reviews or meta-analyses? Evaluating retrieval qualities of Google Scholar, PubMed, and 26 other resources. *Research Synthesis Methods*, 11*(2), 181–217. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jrsm.1378>
- Hong, Q. N., Pluye, P., Fabregues, S., Bartlett, G., Boardman, F., Cargo, M., Dagenais, P., Gagnon, M.-P., Griffiths, F., Nicolau, B., O’Cathain, A., Rousseau, M.-C., & Vedel, I. (2018). Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool (MMAT), version 2018: User guide. *Education for Information*, 34*(4), 285–291. <https://doi.org/10.3233/EFI-180221>
- Jain, A., & Boora, S. (2020). Emotional autonomy and self-esteem in teenagers: In association with authoritative parenting style. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 8(4), 60–65. <https://doi.org/10.25215/0804.009>
- Jugovac, S., O’Kearney, R., Hawes, D. J., & Pasalich, D. S. (2022). Attachment- and emotion-focused parenting interventions for child and adolescent externalizing and internalizing behaviors: A meta-analysis. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review*, 25(4), 754–773. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10567-022-00401-8>
- Ma, D., Cheung, R. Y. M., & Cheung, C. (2025). Parenting approaches and feelings of autonomy among adolescents in two cultures. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0165025425139236>
- Martins, M. C., Santos, A. F., Fernandes, M., & Veríssimo, M. (2021). Attachment and the development of moral emotions in children and adolescents: A systematic review. *Children*, 8(10), 915. <https://doi.org/10.3390/children8100915>
- Munn, Z., Barker, T. H., Moola, S., Tufanaru, C., Stern, C., McArthur, A., Stephenson, M., & Aromataris, E. (2020). Methodological quality of case series studies: An introduction to the JBI critical appraisal tool. *JBIC Evidence Synthesis*, 18*(10), 2127–2133. <https://doi.org/10.11124/JBISIR-D-19-00099>
- Nandini, K., & Krisnatuti, D. (2024). The effect of parent-adolescent attachment and sibling relationship on decision-making ability. *Journal of Child, Family, and Consumer Studies*, 3(2), 127–135. <https://doi.org/10.29244/jcfcs.3.2.127-135>
- Page, M. J., McKenzie, J. E., Bossuyt, P. M., Boutron, I., Hoffmann, T. C., Mulrow, C. D., et al. (2021). The PRISMA 2020 statement: An updated guideline for reporting systematic reviews. *BMJ*, 372*, n71. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.n71>

- Persram, R. J., Martin-Storey, A., & Stack, D. M. (2023). Differential effects of maternal- and paternal-adolescent attachments on friendship security and intimacy. *British Journal of Developmental Psychology*, 41(1), 49–67. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjdp.12433>
- Rethlefsen, M. L., Kirtley, S., Waffenschmidt, S., Ayala, A. P., Moher, D., Page, M. J., Koffel, J. B., & PRISMA-S Group. (2021). PRISMA-S: An extension to the PRISMA statement for reporting literature searches in systematic reviews. *Systematic Reviews*, 10*, 39. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13643-020-01542-z>
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2017). *Self-determination theory: Basic psychological needs in motivation, development, and wellness*. Guilford Press.
- Sarfika, R., Saifudin, I. M. M. Y., Sari, I. M., Murni, D., Malini, H., & Abdullah, K. L. (2023). Investigating associations between emotional and behavioral problems, self-esteem, and parental attachment among adolescents: A cross-sectional study in Indonesia. *Heliyon*, 9(11), e21459. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2023.e21459>
- Sholekhah, A., & Pertiwi, P. P. (2024). Parental attachment in Generation Z adolescents: Comparison in matrilineal and patrilineal kinship systems in Indonesia. *Gadjah Mada Journal of Psychology*, 10(2). <https://doi.org/10.22146/gamajop.88166>
- Sterne, J. A. C., Savovic, J., Page, M. J., Elbers, R. G., Blencowe, N. S., Boutron, I., et al. (2019). RoB 2: A revised tool for assessing risk of bias in randomised trials. *BMJ*, 366*, 14898. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.l4898>
- Vasquez, A. C., Patall, E. A., Fong, C. J., Corrigan, A. S., & Pine, L. (2016). Parent autonomy support, academic achievement, and psychosocial functioning: A meta-analysis of research. *Educational Psychology Review*, 28, 605–644. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-015-9329-z>
- Xiang, S., & Liu, Y. (2018). Understanding the joint effects of perceived parental psychological control and insecure attachment styles: A differentiated approach to adolescent autonomy. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 126*, 12–18. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2018.01.009>