

# Adolescence Emotional Separation and Detachment from Parents

Dr. Puja Kumari<sup>1</sup>; Vartika<sup>2</sup>

## Authors:

- <sup>1</sup>. Assistant Professor, Assistant Professor, School of Humanities and Social Sciences (SOHSS), Department of Psychology & Mental Health, Gautam Buddha University, Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh
- <sup>2</sup>. BA Psychology (Hons), Assistant Professor, School of Humanities and Social Sciences (SOHSS), Department of Psychology & Mental Health, Gautam Buddha University, Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh

**Corresponding Author: Dr Puja Kumari:**

Publication Date: 2025/02/24

**Abstract:** **Background:** Adolescence marks a critical period of development characterized by profound psychological, emotional, and social transformations. One salient aspect of this transformative journey is the intricate process of emotional separation and detachment from parents. As adolescents strive to establish their own identities and navigate the challenges of independence, the dynamics of parent-child relationships undergo a noteworthy shift. **Aim:** This study examines adolescence emotional separation and detachment from parents, recognizing adolescence as a crucial developmental stage marked by significant changes in emotional regulation and parent-child relationships. **Objective:** To examine the factors contributing to emotional separation and detachment from parents among adolescents, identify the role of parent-adolescent relationships in the process, and assess the overall impact. **Method:** A systematic review of 30 studies from Science Direct, JSTOR, Pub Med, and Google Scholar was conducted using keywords such as "adolescence emotional separation," "detachment from parents," and "parent-adolescent relationship." **Result:** The study reveals adolescence as a crucial stage of emotional separation and detachment from parents, where adolescents seek individuality and identity. Emotional separation involves disentangling from parental influence, while detachment signifies a desire for privacy and autonomy.

**Keywords:** *Adolescence Development, Separation, Emotion Regulation, Detachment, Parent-Adolescent Relationships*

**How to Cite:** Dr. Puja Kumari; Vartika (2025) Adolescence Emotional Separation and Detachment from Parents.

*International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology*, 10(2), 423-425.

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14928750>

## I. INTRODUCTION

Between the ages of 13 and the early 20s, adolescence is a period of transition from childhood to adulthood during which people go through major changes in their biology, cognition, social interactions, and interpersonal relationships (Heller & Casey, 2016; Larson & Sheeber, 2008). Parent-adolescent interactions alter as a result of growing independence, shifting emotional regulation, and the adjustment to new social settings (Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1984; Schneiders et al., 2007).

Ronments, increased independence, and evolving emotional regulation all contribute to changes in parent-adolescent relationships (Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1984; Schneiders et al., 2007).

Emotional separation from parents is an essential component of individuation, a concept introduced by Erik Erikson (1968). This process involves adolescents differentiating themselves from their family unit to establish autonomy and self-sufficiency. Emotional separation is not about severing ties but rather transforming the parent-child relationship to accommodate greater independence while maintaining emotional bonds (Smetana et al., 2004).

## II. METHODOLOGY

### ➤ Aim:

To examine adolescence emotional separation and detachment from parents as a crucial developmental stage influencing emotional regulation and parent-child relationships.

### ➤ Objectives of the Study:

- Identify factors contributing to emotional separation and detachment.
- Evaluate the role of parent-adolescent relationships in shaping emotional separation.
- Analyze the impact of emotional separation on psychological well-being and social adjustment.

### ➤ Hypotheses of the study:

- Significant factors influence emotional separation and detachment during adolescence.
- Emotional separation and detachment impact psychological well-being and identity formation.
- Parent-adolescent relationships significantly influence the process of emotional separation.

### ➤ Inclusion Criteria

- Peer-reviewed studies published in the last 20 years in English.
- Research on adolescents aged 12-19 years.
- Both qualitative and quantitative studies from diverse cultural backgrounds.

### ➤ Exclusion Criteria

- Non-peer-reviewed sources such as opinion pieces and book reviews.
- Studies over 20 years old unless foundational.
- Research on non-human subjects or outside the 12-19 age range.

### ➤ Variables Studied

- Independent Variables: Adolescence traits, family dynamics, attachment style.
- Dependent Variables: Emotional independence, behavioral adjustments, identity formation.

## III. RESULTS

Findings indicate that adolescence is a pivotal stage characterized by emotional separation and detachment from parents. Emotional separation involves a shift towards greater individuality, autonomy, and identity formation. Adolescents seek to disentangle themselves from parental influence while still maintaining emotional connections. The process includes:

### ➤ Individualization:

Seeking distinctiveness from parental beliefs and values.

### ➤ Emotional Autonomy:

Developing the ability to regulate emotions independently.

### ➤ Conflict Management:

Resolving disagreements with parents in a mature manner.

While separation fosters independence, it can also lead to communication breakdowns, conflicts, and feelings of isolation if not navigated properly. Parents must balance support and space, ensuring a smooth transition for adolescents.

## IV. DISCUSSION

Research underscores the complexity of adolescence emotional separation, emphasizing several key factors:

### ➤ Emotional Autonomy

Adolescents must establish independence while maintaining emotional bonds. Studies suggest that emotional autonomy fosters self-esteem and social competence (Steinberg & Silverberg, 1986; Allen et al., 1994).

### ➤ Parent-Adolescent Relationship Quality

Supportive and communicative relationships facilitate healthy autonomy, whereas conflict or neglect can hinder the separation process (Allen & Hauser, 1996; Grotevant & Cooper, 1985).

### ➤ Balanced Parenting

Excessive control or lack of support can lead to distress, whereas balanced parenting fosters resilience and independence (Steinberg & Silk, 2002; Smetana et al., 2004).

### ➤ Implications for Mental Health

While excessive detachment is associated with loneliness, depression, and anxiety, moderate detachment promotes personal development (Larson et al., 1996; Noom et al., 1999).

## V. CONCLUSION

Adolescent growth depends on emotional detachment and isolation since it promotes autonomy and identity creation. In order to successfully navigate this shift, emotional control is essential, as it affects psychological outcomes including depression, anxiety, and self-esteem. The process is greatly impacted by the nature of the parent-adolescent relationship; strong bonds between parents and adolescents encourage independence while preserving emotional ties. The process of

separation is also influenced by demographic variables like age, gender, and socioeconomic position.

## REFERENCES

- [1]. Allen, J. P., & Hauser, S. T. (1996). Autonomy and relatedness in adolescent-family interactions as predictors of young adults' states of mind regarding attachment. *Development and Psychopathology*, 8(4), 793–809.
- [2]. Allen, J. P., Hauser, S. T., Bell, K. L., & O'Connor, T. G. (1994). Longitudinal assessment of autonomy and relatedness in adolescent-family interactions as predictors of adolescent ego development and self-esteem. *Child Development*, 65(1), 179–194.
- [3]. Csikszentmihalyi, M., & Larson, R. (1984). *Being adolescent: Conflict and growth in the teenage years*. Basic Books.
- [4]. Erikson, E. H. (1968). *Identity: Youth and crisis*. W. W. Norton & Company.
- [5]. Grotevant, H. D., & Cooper, C. R. (1985). Patterns of interaction in family relationships and the development of identity exploration in adolescence. *Child Development*, 56(2), 415–428.
- [6]. Heller, A. S., & Casey, B. J. (2016). The neurodynamics of emotion: Delineating typical and atypical emotional processes during adolescence. *Developmental Science*, 19(1), 3–18.
- [7]. Larson, R., & Sheeber, L. (2008). *Adolescents' emotions: Developmental and cultural perspectives*. Routledge.
- [8]. Larson, R. W., Richards, M. H., Moneta, G., Holmbeck, G., & Duckett, E. (1996). Changes in adolescents' daily interactions with their families from ages 10 to 18: Disengagement and transformation. *Developmental Psychology*, 32(4), 744–754.
- [9]. Noom, M. J., Deković, M., & Meeus, W. H. (1999). Autonomy, attachment and psychosocial adjustment during adolescence: A double-edged sword? *Journal of Adolescence*, 22(6), 771–783.
- [10]. Schneiders, J., Nicolson, N. A., Berkhof, J., Feron, F. J., van Os, J., & de Vries, M. W. (2007). Mood reactivity to daily social interactions in early adolescence: Relationship to parental psychopathology. *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, 46(12), 1486–1495.
- [11]. Smetana, J. G., Campione-Barr, N., & Metzger, A. (2004). Adolescent development in interpersonal and societal contexts. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 57, 255–284.
- [12]. Steinberg, L., & Silk, J. S. (2002). Parenting adolescents. In M. H. Bornstein (Ed.), *Handbook of parenting: Vol. 1. Children and parenting* (2nd ed., pp. 103–133). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- [13]. Steinberg, L., & Silverberg, S. B. (1986). The vicissitudes of autonomy in early adolescence. *Child Development*, 57(4), 841–851.