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Exploring the Impact of Parenting Styles on Emotion Regulation Across

South African Generations

By

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Abstract

This study explores the integral relationship between parenting styles (PS) and emotion regulation (ER) across four generations (Baby Boomers, Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z) within the context of South Africa (SA) for Black Africans, Coloureds, and Indian ethnicities. Numerous sources of literature have emphasised the impact of parenting on ER; however, a gap is apparent in understanding how these relationships progress from childhood into adulthood, especially in the SA context. This mixed-method study utilised the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale (DERS) and the Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ), complemented by semi-structured interviews. The findings gave insight into Authoritarian (strict) parenting styles being dominant across generations, with Generation Z experiencing higher signs of emotion dysregulation, especially when exposed to parental psychopathology. On the contrary, Generation Y demonstrated the positive effects of Authoritative parenting styles on ER. In older generations (Generation X and Baby Boomers), themes of grappling with the repercussions of apartheid, socio-economic challenges, traditional norms, and prioritising survival over emotional expression and reflection came out. The study shed light on generational contextual factors indigenous to the SA context. As older generations would express warmth through action (community connections, nurturing care, food), while younger generations increasingly sought emotional connection through open communication and understanding. The results advocate for a further need to explore these relationships, and therefore, future interventions should focus on fostering emotional validation and supportive relationships across the generations. Overall, this study emphasises the subjective socio-cultural context of SA in discussions about parenting and ER. In the process of de-centring from Eurocentric norms, it highlights the diversity of experiences in the development of emotional regulation across the lifespan.

Key Words: Parenting Styles, Emotion Regulation, Generations; Z, Y, X and Baby Boomers, South Africa, Multicultural Research, Externalising Behaviours, Internalising Behaviours,

Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale, Parental Authority Questionnaire, Bio-Ecological Framework.

Glossary and Abbreviations of Terms

The following dissertation will refer to various terminology throughout the paper. For clarification and ease of reading, below is a list of abbreviations with their associated meanings.

Glossary

Term	Definition
PS	Parenting Styles
ER	Emotion Regulation
Gen Z	Generation Z (ages 18 – 24)
Gen Y	Generation Y (ages 25 – 40)
Gen X	Generation X (ages 41 – 56)
Baby Boomers	Baby Boomers (ages 57 – 75)
DERS	Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale
PAQ	Parental Authority Questionnaire
Internalising Factors	Inwardly directed behaviours (anxiety, depression, social withdrawal or psychosomatic symptoms)
Externalising Factors	Outwardly directed behaviours (aggression, hyperactivity, impulsivity, substance use, and conduct disorders)

Note. The generation age ranges were defined in 2021/2022; updated ranges for 2025 are seen on page 9 in the last paragraph.

Declaration of Authenticity

In accordance with the University of Witwatersrand, I, Taahirah Chafeker, the undersigned, hereby declare that this research report titled *“Exploring the Impact of Parenting Styles on Emotion Regulation Across South African Generations”* is my own original work. All sources that have contributed to the development of the literature and the completion of this dissertation have been cited (in-text and in reference list) under the American Psychological Association (APA) 7 referencing guidelines. As a means to ensure academic integrity and transparency. This dissertation is being submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Master of Education (Educational Psychology) degree at the University of the Witwatersrand. It has not been previously submitted for any degree or examination at any other University.

Signature: Taahirah Chafeker

Date: 30th March 2025

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Many emotion regulation abilities stem from different child-rearing practices that have had a universal impact on how children are taught to handle their emotions (Buckholdt et al., 2014; Li et al., 2019). Emotion regulation abilities develop during childhood in parenting interactions, as parents react to a myriad of children's emotions, which can be validated or invalidated across generations (Li et al., 2019; Shaw & Starr, 2019). *Emotion regulation (ER)* is defined as the evaluative process of managing an array of positive and negative emotions that causes an internal or external reaction (Sheppes et al., 2015). Clinical literature has highlighted that difficulty in emotional regulation could be related to psychopathological symptoms originating from childhood and transgressing to later life (Jazaieri & Gross, 2013; Sheppes et al., 2015). Considering the implications of early parenting practices and their effect on an individual's ability to regulate their emotions adequately, it is imperative for us to understand the relationship between parenting styles and emotion regulation, if we endeavour to create awareness and implement future preventative interventions that may bring about change. In doing so, this will enable us to contribute to the limited South African (SA) literature. By exploring the relationship of parenting and emotions across diverse generations, this research study aims to inform an understanding of how different SA generations learn to regulate their emotions according to the type of parenting received while taking multiple environmental factors into account.

Notably, parents act as a lynchpin in children's development, as they influence children's introjections and perceptions of the world. These influences arise through the intergenerational transmission of parenting and regulation norms that are carried through generations (Fasang and Raab, 2013). Research based on Baumrind's conceptualisation of parenting styles (PS) has produced a remarkably consistent picture of the type of parenting conducive to the optimal socialisation of children (Baumrind, 1967; Schneider et al., 2005). Baumrind (1967) described parenting styles as globally stable patterns of behaviour toward

parenting in her typology of socialisation practices. She defined three patterns of parenting control (authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive) and their consequences on children (Baumrind, 1971). Later, Maccoby and Martin (1983) reclassified the styles from a demanding and responsive perspective *to establish four parenting styles: authoritarian, authoritative, indulgent and negligent*. These parenting styles are high determinants in the formation of healthy development or maladaptive coping later in life, this is reflected in emotion regulation abilities by looking at internalising behaviours (i.e., depression and anxiety) and externalising behaviours (eating disorders, suicidal tendencies, violence, antisocial behaviours and substance abuse) (Lucktong et al., 2018).

Living in an ever-changing society, it is inevitable to encounter different experiences and progressions across generations. As time evolves, we as humans naturally modify ourselves to integrate into the current society (Fasang and Raab, 2013). In this development, comes continual security of family, being the primary source of a person's life understandings as it shapes an individualised worldview (Min et al., 2012). These familial influences may be linked to the transmission of values, norms, socio-historical influences and culture identification (De Vries et al., 2009; Min et al., 2012). The continuation of familial norms is termed *intergenerational transmission*, as it denotes an outcome on offspring due to parenting and environmental impacts (Schönpflug, 2001; Van Ijzendoorn, 1992). In addressing this impact across successive generations, we can categorise them periodically to observe a shift or continuation by looking at age as a contributing factor. In defining generations with a roughly 20-year gap between them, we can commonly observe intervals of *5 generations*: The *Traditionalists* (born between 1925 and 1945; currently 80+ or older), *Baby Boomers* (born between 1946 and 1964; with an age range between 79-61 years), *Generation X* (Gen X established from 1965 to 1980; with ages between 60-45 years), *Generation Y* (Gen Y is also known as millennials), they are born between 1981-1996 and fall between the age ranges of 44-29 (Twenge, 2023; Wiedmer, 2015). Lastly, *Generation Z* (Gen Z falls between the years 1997 and 2014, with their approximate age being between 28 and 11 years (Moscrip, 2019; Twenge, 2023; Williamson, 2020)). In light of the above, we can refer to existing literature to

gain insight into the intricacies of parenting styles that affect how individuals regulate their emotions.

1.2 Rationale

According to Morris et al. (2017), ER is viewed as a valuable skill that parents help develop in their children, as this predicts the success of future relationships in environmental contexts. Numerous Eurocentric studies emphasising the relationship between parenting and ER in children and adults have been published internationally (Bariola et al., 2011; Calkins & Hill, 2007; Dunstan et al., 2015; Morris et al., 2017; Manzeske & Stright, 2009; Tani et al., 2018; Rodriguez et al., 2016). Limitations of the studies were related to the fact that the majority of studies looked at the relationship of PS and ER in children, and less literature addressed the emergence in adulthood (Bariola et al., 2011; Calkins & Hill, 2007; Dunstan et al., 2015; Morris et al., 2017; Manzeske & Stright, 2009; Tani et al., 2018)

Findings of the existing literature have informed us of the relationship between prominent PS and ER abilities on an international basis. This has restricted a knowledgeable understanding of indigenous factors that are unique to SA (Akhtar et al., 2017; Gibson & Francis, 2019; Mosavel et al., 2015; Ogbu, 1981; Theron & Theron, 2010). Studies conducted globally don't necessarily account for single-headed households, resilience, environmental impacts, the importance of extended families, cultural norms and community support among many other factors specific to South Africa (Akhtar et al., 2017; Gibson & Francis, 2019; Mosavel et al., 2015; Ogbu, 1981; Theron & Theron, 2010). These factors are also evident in other developing world countries like China and India (Chuang et al., 2018 and Joseph & John, 2008).

Most studies conducted in Australia (Bariola et al., 2011; Dunstan et al., 2015), the USA (Calkins & Hill, 2007; Morris et al., 2017; Manzeske & Stright, 2009; Rodriguez et al., 2016), and Italy (Tani et al., 2018) posit that when parenting styles result in the emergence of emotion dysregulation (due to unfavourable validation of emotions), it leads to a risk factor of psychological disorders. According to Bariola et al. (2011) and the American Psychiatric

Association (2013), emotion regulation difficulties are prevalent across a wide range of mental disorders, as outlined in the DSM-5®. Identifying the prevalence of these symptoms assists in treating psychopathology and supports the early prevention of internalising and externalising difficulties. DThis should, however, include a justification and consideration for the indigenous environmental context of South Africa, as possible risk and protective factors could be overlooked based on international norms and findings that influence the development of ER abilities. An apparent example of this would be the fact that emerging literature does not account for the protective factors of extended families (grandparents or aunts/uncles taking care of the child), along with the fact that “parenting” styles are categorised into studying maternal and paternal parents together and not separately. This acts as a restrictive factor in studying the impact of single parents, divorcees and when two parents have significantly different types of parenting styles (Akhtar et al., 2017; Bariola et al., 2011; Calkins & Hill, 2007; Dunstan et al., 2015; Gibson & Francis, 2019; Manzeske and Stright, 2009; Morris et al., 2017; Tani et al., 2018; Rodriguez et al., 2016).

The majority of literature around PS and ER is linked to quantitative measures since parenting and emotion regulation have reliable instrument scales that are used (Karreman et al., 2006; Turpyn et al., 2015). As a result, the subjectivity of parenting perceptions and emotion regulation transmissions is constrained to the items in the questionnaires, instead of accounting for ecological influences and subjective norms. To understand the subjectivity of factors, it would be important to look at the change or continuation of PS and ER across different generations. This will give insight into the parenting techniques of each generation and what the impact of this has been on how South African individuals regulate their emotions. By exploring the continuation or discontinuation of PS and ER, we would add value to SA literature, as research including these variables across four generations has not, to the best of the researcher’s awareness and knowledge, been studied in South Africa (SA) as yet.

In looking at patterns like these, this proposal is engrossed towards exploring how the generational impact of parenting has shifted according to the norms of society and impacted how adults have learnt to regulate their emotions due to their childhood experiences and

exposure to emotional expression. In doing this, we will be able to decipher how the periodic impact of historical factors and current environmental factors could affect the way individuals are reared and taught to deal with their emotions. This would be particularly interesting to investigate in children who experienced apartheid in SA (Baby Boomers, Gen X and the first half of Gen Y) and how their norms of regulation and parenting would differ in future generations (latter half of Gen Y and Gen Z). In taking the impact of apartheid into account, and moving away from Eurocentric norms, it would be of importance to explore Black African, Coloured and Indian races in our context as a means to understand the generational impact that systemic factors have had on the individual and how this impact is perpetuated in today's society. In exploring these facets, we will be able to find a correlation between all variables of the study (PS and ER across generations) to inform future interventions against the prevalence of psychiatric disorders due to emotion dysregulation that develops from childhood to adulthood.

In conducting this research, we will be able to add to an awareness related to the responsibility of parental validation of their children's emotions and the acknowledgement towards understanding and encouraging the expression of this multitude of emotions in SA. With the multicultural context of SA, in conducting this research and including diverse samples of Black Africans, Coloured, and Indians from different socioeconomic backgrounds, cultures, or family systems, we will be able to explore how emotion regulation is constructed across different generations. This will enable us to explore diversity in the SA context away from Eurocentric norms.

1.3 Research Aims

The overall aim of using a mixed-method research design is to measure the ways in which different parenting styles have influenced emotion regulation across four generations (Baby Boomers, Gen X, Gen Y, Gen Z) in the context of South Africa by focusing on Black Africans, Coloureds and Indians. Additionally, the study aims to assess how each generation (Baby Boomers, Gen X, Gen Y, Gen Z) of parenting styles correlates to the validation or

invalidation of emotions. These will be explored by looking at the transmission of norms of emotion regulation and the impact of environmental factors through interview processes.

1.4 Research Questions and Hypotheses

1. Will parenting styles and emotion regulation abilities change across the four generations (Baby Boomers, Gen X, Gen Y, Gen Z)?
2. Authoritative parenting will positively impact the presence of effective emotion regulation abilities across generations (Baby Boomers, Gen X, Gen Y, Gen Z)?
3. Authoritarian parenting will negatively impact the presence of emotion dysregulation across generations (Baby Boomers, Gen X, Gen Y, Gen Z)?
4. Permissive parenting will negatively impact emotion dysregulation across generations (Baby Boomers, Gen X, Gen Y, Gen Z)?

Overview of Research Report

This paper is structured into 6 *chapters*. *Chapter 2* is the *Literature Review*, which aims to create a theoretical foundation by focusing on relevant frameworks allowing a comprehensive understanding of the literature around PS, ER, and generations. This enables the researcher to highlight previous findings and noteworthy limitations. *Chapter 3* is the *Methods* section, which will look at the research design, sampling, instrumentation, data collection and analysis. It will end off by focusing on ethics and reflexivity. *Chapter 4* will be the *Results* section, where the researcher presents descriptive and inferential quantitative findings, followed by qualitative findings based on emerging themes that arose. An integrated results summary, with a chart, will be included for clarity on the mixed-method findings of the study. *Chapter 5* will be the *Discussion*, which aims to analyse the significance of the findings and compare them to previously discussed literature. This section will lead to the last *chapter*, 6, the *Conclusion, Limitations and Recommendations*, allowing the researcher to speak to implications and potential areas for future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

In a constantly evolving society, we can observe a change in societal norms, structures, traditions and communities over time. Taking this into account, it is safe to acknowledge an inevitable shift in child-rearing practices that consequently have an impact on the way children regulate their emotions (Bee, 2017; Taylor, 2014). This is predicted due to the change in generational norms over time, as parenting perceptions have shifted to become less strict across generations (Chen & Kaplan, 2001; Garcia et al., 2020; Simons et al., 1991; Taylor, 2014). Based on historical norms, moral authority was given significant value in the past. This was possibly because Baby Boomers were brought up by parents who lived and experienced World War 2, the Great Depression, and economic struggle. As an outcome of this, Baby Boomers' parents developed a different worldview in comparison to later generations, seen in their hard work, rigid values, dedication, and adherence to rules and law (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008; McCready, 2011; Wiedmer, 2015). This relates to the prevalence of strict Authoritarian parenting for Baby Boomers in comparison to Gen X, Gen Y and Gen Z (Light, 1988; McCready, 2011).

For more insight into how these generational differences have moulded specific parenting styles based on their unique environmental systems, the section below applies theoretical frameworks to strengthen an understanding of these shifts.

2.2 Theoretical Frameworks

2.2.1 *Baumrind's Parenting Styles Framework.*

There has been a vast amount of literature around Diana Baumrind's (1971) theory of parenting styles, some examples entail: Hale (2008) looking at the relationship between Baumrind's parenting styles and parent developmental theory; Kooraneh & Amirsardari (2015) using it as predictors of maladaptive schemas; and Baumrind's theory being predictors of self-actualisation in later life (Dominguez & Carton, 1997).

Baumrind categorises parenting styles into dimensions of parent-child interactions to classify a particular parenting style: *discipline and maturity demands, clarity of communication, nurturance and expectations*. These dimensions differ in accordance with the correlating style of parenting (Baumrind, 1966; Baumrind & Black, 1967) and influence child development at 3 levels, namely social, cognitive, and emotional functioning. The 4 universally known styles of parenting are *Authoritarian, Authoritative, Permissive and Uninvolved*. Baumrind theorised 3 of these styles, to which an uninvolved type was later added (Baumrind, 1971; Darling, 1999). It was hypothesised that parents fit into these styles based on a spectrum of their responsiveness and demanding behaviours. Responsiveness refers to the ability of a parent to communicate, understand emotions, show warmth and provide proof of reciprocity (Baumrind, 1966). = Demanding behaviour refers to the ability of parents to maintain discipline, structure, boundaries and maturity (Darling, 1999). Both elements of demandingness (control) and responsiveness (warmth) are important to create consistency and nurturance in parent-child interactions (Baumrind, 1967). *Figure 1* below provides a visual representation of how the 4 parenting styles have developed based on the different prevalence of warmth and control in parents' interactions with their children (Darling, 1999).

Table 1

The Formulation of Parenting Styles by taking Warmth and Control into account

	Low Demandingness	High Demandingness
Low Responsiveness	Neglecting Parenting Styles	Authoritarian Parenting Styles
High Responsiveness	Permissive Parenting Styles	Authoritative Parenting Styles

Note: Demandingness (Control) and Responsiveness (Warmth) is looked at on a spectrum to formulate 4 Parenting Styles (Darling, 1999).

Each parenting style has been found to affect development in unique ways. This could be linked to elements of responsiveness (warmth) equating to parents validating and

understanding children's emotions, with the latter leading to emotional stability or instability (Llorca-Mestre et al., 2017). Authoritative parenting (high warmth and control) is associated with high levels of self-reliance, self-esteem, independence, social responsibility, and positive achievement orientations (Baumrind, 1967). Parenting styles, such as Authoritarian parenting (low warmth and high control), have been linked with maladaptive outcomes such as aggression, anxiety, poor academic performance and psychiatric behaviour (Llorca-Mestre et al., 2017; Roelofs et al., 2006). Permissive parenting (high warmth and low control) is said to have themes of a lack of control and boundaries. This PS was associated with internalising and externalising behavioural problems; an outcome of experiencing this PS was signs of emotional dependency, a lack of social responsibility and anti-social behaviour (Alizadeh et al., 2011; Barton & Hirsch, 2016). Studies that incorporated Baumrind's (1967) parenting styles framework found significant effects on internalising and externalising behaviours for their respective samples. These behaviours are linked to our ability to regulate individualised emotions in childhood, leading up to adulthood (Lucktong et al., 2018). To understand these terms further, examples of internalising behaviours refer to inwardly directed behaviours, where emotional dysfunction is seen in anxiety, depression, social withdrawal or psychosomatic symptoms (Schneider, Falkenberg, & Berger, 2022). Externalising factors refer to outwardly directed signs, like aggression, hyperactivity, impulsivity, substance use, and conduct disorders (Lucktong et al., 2018; Schneider, Falkenberg, & Berger, 2022). Baumrind's (1967) parenting styles framework applies to this study as it will assist in examining the research questions, which measure the variables of authoritative, authoritarian and permissive parenting, to assess the impact of these variables on adult emotion regulation abilities across 4 generations.

2.2.2 A Bio-Ecological Framework

In understanding others, it is of critical importance that we take their environmental connection into account, as an impact of their environment could have a ripple effect from a systemic lens. This is especially important in the context of SA, as we base a majority of

psychological theories on Eurocentric norms that do not account for the multi-diverse context from which we come.

Bronfenbrenner (1992) was the founder of the eco-systemic theory. He posited that the model is constantly evolving and becoming relevant as a framework in today's society, thus the emergence of the Bio-Ecological theory. The theory enables us to study human behaviour and development as a science. This newly adapted Bio-Ecological model symbolises a transition of understanding context as well as the unique processes of development (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007).

The Bio-Ecological approach has 4 components to understanding the organism in their system: *process, person, time and context*. This is looked at alongside the relationships and protective factors an individual has (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007). The theory looks at behaviour in unity between the individual and their environment (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). The individual is in constant interaction with their environment (context), which comprises 4 components: the *microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem and macrosystem*. The *microsystem* is located on the 1st system level and acts as the inner circle to an individual; this consists of parents, friends, teachers, etc (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). It is at this stage where positive relationships, values and beliefs are formed from the immediate people in the person's life (Wachs, 2010). The *mesosystem* then follows and is primarily focused on the interaction between microsystems; this proves to be interconnected as communication is integral between key members in an individual's microsystem to foster adequate socialisation and support (Härkönen, 2001). The *exosystem* follows after, and this looks at the individual away from their microsystems; it does not directly involve the person, but it may have an indirect effect on them. Examples of this would be media, parents' work, poverty, etc (Härkönen, 2001). Lastly, there is the macrosystem, which combines all systems as themes of culture, social contexts, societal beliefs and norms, lifestyles, all developed through each system (Bronfenbrenner, 2005).

In looking at the system-level impacts from an SA perspective, it would be interesting to explore how the influence of generations correlated to different parenting styles and emotion

regulation abilities (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008; McCready, 2011; Wiedmer, 2015). By taking on this framework, it enables us to understand the population from a subjective lens rather than looking at the evident symptoms of maladaptive functioning from a pathological approach (Bronfenbrenner, 2005; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007). The framework is interrelated and will allow us to look into factors per participant that relates to elements of time (generational shifts), indigenous contextual factors in their environment (microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem and macrosystem's that influence the individual) and person characteristics (innate factors influencing developmentally generative or disruptive progressions) (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007).

To understand this framework, a study by Bornstein et al. (2003) investigated the way multiple systems contribute to maternal insights around their parenting characteristics. Spheres that were explored were: Socio-economic factors, gender and language, support, sociability, temperament, intellect and education, and parental awareness (Bornstein et al., 2003). The study also looked at the microsystem of the individual by exploring internal self-perceptions that were taught from parents and teachers. The results supported the idea of parenting perceptions being subjective and that it was influenced by the environment (e.g. socio-economic status, employment stress, and parental support) (Bornstein et al., 2003). A study done in China employed a Bio-Ecological model in looking at the impact of culture on parenting styles (Chuang et al., 2018). Findings provided evidence of intergroup dynamics and societal norms being impacting factors on parenting from a systemic approach, by showing the in-depth subjectivity of an environment having an impact on different individuals (Chuang et al., 2018). The aforementioned literature linked parental invalidation of emotions to emotion dysregulation in a child's development, which leads to mental health risks as they may present with psychopathological (externalising and internalising) symptoms. McCoy (2013) conducted a study looking at the externalising factor of violence and aggression by relating it to self-regulation abilities from a Bio-Ecological perspective. The study found that children's exposure to violence did not directly predict trouble with self-regulation as mediating factors involved

different types of exposure, family protective mechanisms and support and the norms in which violence is seen, in their community from the macrosystem (McCoy, 2013).

2.3 Parenting Styles

A recent study by Alonso-Stuyck (2019) addressed what PS encourages healthy development and lifestyles in adolescents. This study looked at the PS alongside a systems-level approach to understand the context, together with child-rearing practices. Findings suggested that a versatile PS approach is recommended for adolescent wellbeing, with Authoritative and Permissive parenting being deemed most appropriate in terms of development and autonomy (Alonso-Stuyck, 2019).

The bio-ecological model reiterates the need to take the individual at large into account, where family relationships and the promotion of emotional awareness are taught to children. If we look at Baumrind's (1967) typology alongside this study, we can see that it coincides with the "ideal" fit of Authoritative parenting. Baumrind studied 32 preschool children concerning their parents and addressed 5 dimensions: self-control, avoidance, self-reliance, sociability, and mood. It was notable that a parent who could easily communicate and be responsive had children who were well adjusted in the school setting (Baumrind, 1967). It was noted that children who were independent and autonomous in school were given this liberty at home, which enabled a sense of confidence. Their well-being was also related to the way parents can express love, care, nurturance and empathy (Baumrind, 1967). This expression is connected to how children learn to regulate their emotions from their environment.

Moving away from a Eurocentric approach, a study in India used 72 families to look at the prevalence of certain PS with cultural considerations (Joseph & John, 2008). The study made use of the *Parenting Styles Dimensions Questionnaire* (Robinston et al., 2001) as a quantitative approach to understanding a range of PS that are prominent in India, the study showed that 73% of the participants used an Authoritative PS, with predictive factors of this style being based on the level of education in the parents (Joseph & John, 2008).

2.3.1 Impact of parenting style on child development

The impact of specific parenting styles on child development has been extensively studied. Authoritarian parenting is said to have various adverse effects on development due to the qualities of high control and a lack of warmth. Characteristics of this PS emphasised strict rules, rigidity and obedience (Baumrind, 1967; Jadon & Tripathi, 2017). This PS has a certain level of consistency, as it defines the rules in the parent-child relationship. Ang & Goh (2006) used adolescent self-report scores to look at the effect of authoritarian PS in Asian adolescents. By using cluster analyses, the adolescents reported on their perceptions of authoritarian parenting by their mother and fathers separately. Findings of the Ang & Goh (2006) study were contradictory to previous studies that specified authoritarian PS's being predictors of negative effects on mental health, e.g., low levels of self-esteem, depersonalisation, anxiety and a negative impact on academic performance in schools (Jadon & Tripathi, 2017; Seth & Asudani, 2013; Wolfradt et al., 2003). Ang & Goh's (2006) results indicate that the sample of adolescents who received authoritarian parenting was either well-adjusted or maladjusted (emotionally regulated or dysregulated). This outcome was related to the social constructions of PS having different meanings for Asians in context (Ang & Goh, 2006).

An apparent limitation in the aforementioned studies is the fact that they focus on children and adolescents concerning perceived PS, instead of accounting for an element of maturity in adults who would be able to relate their perceptions of PS to their current worldviews from a qualitative lens. Additionally, when exploring authoritarian PS, studies do not look at the generational impact of what resulted in a parent adopting a specific PS, nor do they account for further protective factors like resilience in the study.

Baumrind (1967) described permissive parenting as having a high encouragement towards autonomy and unconditional acceptance. This can be looked at as the opposite of authoritarian parenting, as it focuses on a free-spirited approach rather than rigid rules. This PS has high warmth and low control (lack of demandingness). Research by Barton & Hirsch (2016) focused on permissive parenting in a group of college (n=524) students and its impact on mental health. The authors also looked at the relationship between permissive parenting

as a predictor of educational entitlement. Findings suggested that there was a positive relationship between permissive parenting and mental health challenges, especially academically, as the findings report an increase in autonomy and lack of rigid rules resulting in an individual having a sense of academic entitlement (Barton &Hirsch, 2016).

To address the limitation of child-based studies, a study done in Japan looked at the impact of authoritarian, authoritative and permissive parenting and its effect in later adult life ($n=1,320$) (Uji et al., 2014). A focus of the study took a confirmatory stance to establish the reliability and validity of the Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ). Findings verified the instrument as an accurate representation of PS. Results indicated a difference in paternal and maternal elements, proving that mothers were reported to be more authoritative (Uji et al., 2014). Authoritarian PS resulted in the respondent's mental health being compromised as it presented with risk factors, difficulties in functioning, and a decline in well-being. The study emphasised the need for future research to look at child-rearing practices from a holistic viewpoint. (Uji et al., 2014). This should take the subjective environmental context of an individual into account. As a means to enable this, we should delve into research done in the context of SA.

2.3.1 The South African Context

Research by Roman et al. (2016) states that parenting styles have become an increasingly popular area of interest in South African research for just shy of 2 decades now. Most research, however, focused on the effects of PS on child development and behaviour (Roman et al., 2016). A study by Latouf (2008) investigated the effects of parenting styles on 24 (64% female) 5-year-old nursery school children based on quantitative measures and reports by their teacher and their parents ($n = 30$) in Gauteng. Instruments used were the Parental Styles Dimension Questionnaire (filled out by parents), which measured Baumrind's (1967) parenting styles (Authoritative, Authoritarian, and Permissive), as well as teacher ratings using the Behavioural Questionnaire. Latouf (2008) determined, using correlational

analysis, that Authoritative Parenting was associated with child prosocial behaviour, which was furthermore reported to be indicative of healthy child development and self-esteem.

Kritzas & Grobler (2005) investigated the relationship between perceived parenting styles and resilience amongst adolescents. Using stratified random sampling, participants included 360 English-speaking Grade 12 learners from a racially integrated school in Bloemfontein. Data was collected using Buri's (1991) Parental Authority Questionnaire ($\alpha = 0.80$) to measure perceived parenting styles received, the Orientation to Life Questionnaire ($\alpha = 0.92$) to measure resilience, and the COPE Scale ($\alpha = 0.70$) to measure methods used to manage stressful situations (Kritzas & Grobler, 2005). Using Regression Analysis, Kritzas & Grobler (2005) found that Authoritative parenting was correlated with greater resilience for all genders and races, and that Authoritarian parenting was associated with higher overall emotion-focused coping, frequently associated with higher self-esteem.

Other South African research focused on behavioural outcomes as a result of parental practices which had not directly been linked to emotion regulation, but relate to common associations with maladaptive internalising and externalising behaviours (Amaoteng et al., 2006). Amaoteng et al. (2006) investigated family predictors for alcohol and tobacco use among school-going adolescents ($n = 1800$) in Cape Town, through analysis of variables of parental behavioural control, parental monitoring, and family stress. Using regression analysis, Amaoteng et al. (2006) found that parental control and limit setting predicted higher rates of adolescent substance use behaviours, which is consistent with international research that Authoritarian parenting predicted maladaptive substance use behaviours and poor self-esteem (Amato & Fowler, 2002; Zhou et al., 2003).

Latouf (2008) looked into a group of culturally diverse children, where findings suggested that Authoritative parenting styles were most commonly observed. This may have been influenced by the fact that the participants came from multiple international and SA backgrounds. Both SA and international research findings frequently show that Authoritative parenting is optimal for healthy self-esteem and healthy coping behaviours (Kritzas & Grobler, 2005; Latouf, 2008; Lowe, 2005). Findings by Roman et al. (2015), therefore, become

increasingly important, suggesting that differences in styles of parenting within ethnic groups are what may account for maladaptive behavioural outcomes and poor self-esteem, as shown in research by Amaoteng et al. (2006). This highlights that ethnicity and culture, per se, may not predict parenting styles and, by extension, self-esteem and behavioural outcomes. This study, therefore, sought to explore the effects of each parenting style within the South African context.

2.4 Emotion Regulation

Child-rearing practices are equated to different levels of parental warmth and control that predict PS. The presence of warmth and responsiveness would relate to the way in which parents validate their children's emotions. Morris et al., (2007) published a model to understand what familial factors impacted emotion regulation in children. The model looked at 3 impacting factors as a framework: ways children observe how their parents regulate their emotions (entails modelling and constructing norms), parenting practices related to how parents react to their children's emotional expressions, and lastly, the emotional climate of the family (how families express their emotions, and family relationships) (Morris et al., 2007; Morris et al., 2017).

Emotion dysregulation is often connected to psychiatric disorders and psychopathology in children, leading up to adulthood (Buckholdt et al., 2014; Jazaieri & Gross, 2013; Sheppes et al., 2015). These psychopathological symptoms are related to externalising and internalising factors (Buckholdt et al., 2014). 80 Diverse parent and teenage dyads were investigated, using the *Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale* (DERS) to measure regulation abilities (Gratz & Roemer, 2004). The DERS is a 36-item report that measures 6 components of emotion regulation (impulse control, strategies, goals, acceptance, a level of awareness and clarity) (Gratz & Roemer, 2004). Parental invalidation was reported and associated with a positive relationship between emotion dysregulation and parental invalidation, and as an outcome that impacted the prevalence of internalising and externalising (substance use, aggression and PTSD prevalence) behaviours (Chou et al., 2018).

Considering externalising and internalising problems mentioned above in Agazzi et al., (2019) and Flouri, Lewis and Francesconi (2020), a study by Roelofs et al., (2006) looked at the internal and externalising problems in children based on the link between attachment style and child-rearing behaviours. The study aimed to examine the relationships between negative family factors and adverse parental rearing with a sample of 237 (n) 9-12-year-olds in the Netherlands. A Swedish scale by Muris et al., (2003), *My memories of Upbringing*, measured the perceived parental rearing behaviours (40 items) by looking at emotional warmth, rejection, overprotection, and anxious rearing.

Further, measures of internalising symptoms (e.g., anxiety and depression) and externalising symptoms (e.g., aggression, anti-social, disruptive behaviour) were studied with appropriate scales. The study analysed the data by using correlations, t-tests, ANOVAs and regression analyses. Results indicated that a consistent pattern of parental rearing behaviours (mother and father) accounted for a significant proportion of variance in internalising and externalising symptoms (Roelofs et al., 2006). It showed that attachment played a less evident role, supporting gender differences by indicating that negative family factors in fathers had a higher impact on boys and mothers on daughters. Ultimately proving that both parents aid uniquely in the promotion of psychopathological symptoms in children (Roelofs et al., 2006). The obvious limitations of this study were that most of the participants were Caucasian (90%), thus not being inclusive of a bigger cultural context. As well as the study not accounting for genetic and environmental factors as influences on externalising and internalising symptoms.

In supporting the study by Roelofs et al., (2006), a collection of similar studies held alike results and tapped into externalising and internalising factors being correlated to parenting and upbringing (Llorca-Mestre et al., 2017; Lucktong et al., 2018; Muris et al., 2003; Rönnlund & Karlsson, 2006). A recent study by Garcia et al., (2020), investigated the impact of Authoritarian parenting on children's ability to adjust socially. In looking into parenting styles, they used a sample of $n=871$ Spanish families to find a difference in cross-generational patterns of parenting, as the younger generation was perceived to be more Authoritative. Despite this shift in parenting styles, the studies found common adjustment styles across

generations. This correlates with the findings of the transmission of generational norms and dysregulation (Gibson & Francis, 2019). The study found evidence that permissive parenting was linked to a higher self-concept. This could be linked to the fact that autonomy equates to more confidence in innate abilities (Garcia et al., 2020).

Authoritative Parenting is deemed as the ideal parenting type in today's society, as it has warmth, flexibility and balance. The studies in the review have all highlighted the benefits and positive effects of this parenting style being transmitted across generations, as well as touching on uninvolved parenting (often associated with absent parents, not included in Baumrind's original PS theory) having positive effects on autonomy (Akhtar et al., 2017; Alonso-Stuyck, 2019; Campbell & Gilmore, 2007; Garcia et al., 2020; Gibson & Francis, 2019; McCullough et al., 2014). The studies have, however, not linked Authoritarian parenting to positive outcomes in children, especially taking into account the transmission of values, structure, consistency and boundary/limit setting in an individual. Taking the context of SA into account, with the rich history of apartheid and economic struggle that led to the need for structure and rigidity, it would be valuable to explore the transmission of the Authoritarian parenting style and the resilience it comes with across the different generations.

2.5 The Relationship between Emotion Regulation and Parenting Styles

Llorca-Mestre et al., (2017) conducted a cross-sectional study in Spain with 610 participants (52% female, 48% male). They looked at the role of parenting styles and peer attachment in foreseeing emotional stability in childhood to adolescence (9 to 12 years). A major finding demonstrated a stronger relationship among emotional instability, anger, and the cognitive dimension of empathy than with parenting styles while accounting for gender (Llorca-Mestre et al., 2017). Studies conducted by Tur-Porcar et al. (2012) and Wahl & Metzner (2012) support this finding. However, this is contrasted by Doinita & Maria (2015), who separately analysed the effects of PS and empathy by gender. The authors looked at children's individuated variables of empathy, anger, and coping mechanisms for the anger (externalisation and self-control). Using the Spanish-adapted 38-item *Children's Reports of*

Parental Behaviour (Schaefer, 1965) and the *Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment*. Analysing the data using ANOVA, correlational analysis and multiple linear regressions, the authors found that parenting styles and peer attachment are equal predictors of emotional stability, suggesting that as children develop, external factors from parents such as peers, act as an influence for children (Llorca-Mestre, Samper-García, Malonda-Vidal, & Cortés-Tomás, 2017). Limitations of the Tur-Porcar et al., (2012) study suggest that the self-reports from youth groups don't account for parents' perceptions as a source of information.

Considering externalising problems mentioned in Llorca-Mestre et al., (2017), a study by Roelofs et al., (2006) looks at the internal and externalising problems in children based on the link between attachment style and parental rearing behaviours. Results indicated that a consistent pattern of parental rearing behaviours (mother and father) accounted for a significant proportion of variance in internalising and externalising symptoms (Roelofs et al., 2006). It showed that fathers had a higher impact on boys, and mothers on daughters, in relation to ER, and that attachment played a less evident role. This study demonstrates that both parents aid uniquely in the promotion of psychopathological symptoms in children, and correlates to themes discussed in the introduction of our study (Roelofs et al., 2006). Limitations of this study show the sample being 90% Caucasian and of similar cultures, thus not being inclusive of a bigger cultural context. Genetic and environmental factors were not accounted for as influencers of externalising and internalising symptoms.

Jabeen et al., (2013) investigated how PS act as predictors towards emotion regulation in Pakistan ($n=194$). A clear difference in paternal and maternal PS was taken into account. The PAQ (Buri, 1991) and Early Adolescents Temperament Questionnaire (Ellis & Rothbart, 2001) were used as instruments in the data collection. Using regression analysis, it was found that authoritative parenting from mothers had a positive impact on ER, and permissive paternal PS had a negative impact on ER (Jabeen et al., 2013). Results of Authoritarian PS did not have any correlation to dysregulation, as many children's parental experiences differed within this style of parenting.

Supporting the Roelofs et al., (2006) study, a collection of similar studies held similar results and tapped into externalising and internalising factors being correlated to parenting and child behaviour (Llorca-Mestre et al., 2017; Lucktong et al., 2018; Muris et al., 2003; Rönnlund & Karlsson, 2006)

2.6 Generations

The transmission of parenting practices and the way we learn to regulate and express our emotions is developed over time. This may play out in generational norms, family introjections and the way in which we encounter our parents dealing with their emotions. There have been different contributing factors to each generation that may be influential in how each generation deals with their emotions. This study seeks to look at all 4 generations (Baby Boomers, Gen X, Gen Y, Gen Z) in making sense of the transmission of the subsequent variables. With an emphasis on generational patterns, Scaramella & Conger (2003) investigated the continuity of hostile parenting with its negative emotion regulation effects across generations. Findings predicted that a hostile PS in one generation would lead to an impact on externalising behaviours in future generations. This proposes that hostility towards children may lead towards a continuous pattern of hostility in future generations (Scaramella & Conger, 2003). A clear gap in this literature is seen as it does not use a well-established parenting instrument to determine the exact correlation between what hostile PS is in comparison to what's perceived as hostile parenting, as well as the environmental influences on the participant.

Bonvalet et al (2014) addressed the history of Baby Boomers from a familial perspective. This relates to them experiencing the after-effects of World Wars, civil rights, military contributions and casualties. Extensive laws and impacts on socio economic statuses led to extensive rules/regulations in society with an after effect of poverty in marginalised communities (Christopher, 2011; Cocks, 2008). This structural environment had a direct effect on the core values and meaning system related to these parents. Core values in this generation put emphasis on a respect for authority, discipline, and levels of security (Wiedmer,

2015). Looking into the SA context, and the impact of apartheid in the past and present in marginalised communities, it is assumed that this sense of discipline and value system will still be present and maintained to date.

Gen X was one of the first generations raised by the commonality of two working parents (Bee, 2017). This occurred between the era of 1965-1980, where Baby Boomers became parents to Gen X. This was a more flexible era due to the war ending. Core values surrounding this global period put focus on pragmatism, entrepreneurial skills, self-reliance and diversity. (Brown, 1997; Stern, 2002). This produced some differences and similarities between European parenting literature, as SA history was influenced by principles of rigorous laws, segregation and separation. Parenting before the working privileges of women was found to be led by a patriarchal society, based on a correlation that women were seen as inferior with limited independent access to resources (Dieng & O'Reilly, 2020). Taking the rainbow nation into account, Roman (2014) looked into the diversity of SA's socio-political setting with regard to literature on parenting. In the SA context, this era became the stepping stone to living and surviving in the apartheid regime (Duh & Struwig, 2015). The influence of apartheid on parenthood resulted in an authoritarian approach to discipline, which was introjected and associated with the need for others to adhere to rules and legislation during the time (Dieng & O'Reilly, 2020; Maqubela, 2013).

According to Bee (2017), Gen Y was born in the time period 1981-1996; they are currently known as the millennials of our era. This generation experienced 9/11, terrorist attacks, natural disasters, and the start of digital technology becoming an integral part of society (Wiedmer, 2015). This had a prominent impact on Gen Y being more socially connected than prior generations. Allen et al. (2015) found that as a result of this instant gratification, millennials were found to be significantly more entitled than Baby Boomers and Gen X's. These results were predicted by age and developmental contexts (e.g., maturation) (Allen et al., 2015). Core values in this generation consisted of achievement, spontaneity, multitasking and an ambitious work ethic (Eckleberry-Hunt & Tucciarone, 2011). Beauchamp and Barnes (2015) found a difference between females of Gen Y and Baby Boomer

generations, by a notable shift of internal constructs regarding work ethic, with baby boomers' qualities relating to expertise and service recovery as compared to Gen Y giving more importance to friendliness, altruism and time structure. Nordin & Malik (2015) found that Gen Y showed signs of creativity by being guided by creative problem-solving methods.

Gen Z's are characterised as the new age generation, the age of technological advancement (Moscrip, 2019). Gen Z's focus on a change in communication and socialisation has shifted to a digital format. Particular emphasis was put on the establishment of empathy and sensitivity in this era, due to their social exposure to diverse topics and points of interest. Gen Z's were typically raised by Gen X's with a particular parenting shift from the authoritarian norm to a more flexible approach, due to moving out of the war and apartheid era (Seemiller & Grace, 2016). Research by Moscrip (2019) and Seemiller and Grace (2016) found that approaches towards parenting had a positive effect on positive parenting practices. Gen Z focused on core values of family, close relationships with family/ friends and emotional support (Wiedmer, 2015). Seemiller & Grace (2016) established that 88% of Gen Z perceived their parents to be close friends rather than advisors.

A quantitative study addressed the breakdown of 3 generational (Baby Boomers, Gen X, and Gen Y) patterns of PS and its impact on self-esteem (Bee, 2017). This is one of the few psychological studies of this nature, due to the literature with generational definitions being newly founded and limited to studying in the workplace rather than psychological practices (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008; McCready, 2011; Wiedmer, 2015). Using the PAQ (Buri, 1991), to establish PS ($n=111$ participants), findings reported that Baby Boomers' parents had a more authoritarian PS than Gen Y, who was more permissive (Bee, 2017). Gen X showed evidence of no notable differences in Authoritarian PS, but findings suggested that parents became less strict as generations progressed (Bee, 2017).

2.7 The Generational Transmission of Parenting Styles

Campbell & Gilmore (2007) conducted a study with a sample of fathers ($n=274$) and mothers ($n=286$) to investigate their insights on PS received and what their PS were. This

allowed the study to see the continuation and discontinuation of child-rearing practices over generations. The study aimed to use *Baumrind's Parenting Styles* as a quantitative feature to determine the patterns of parenting that are followed and disregarded (Baumrind, 1971). It was hypothesised and proved that there would be a socio-cultural modification by which parents in today's generation (Gen X and Gen Y) would assume themselves to be less strict in comparison to their parents (Baby Boomers) (Campbell & Gilmore, 2007). The study made use of 3 versions of *the PAQ* (Buri, 1991). Using a factor analysis, findings suggested a correlation between the generational continuation of Authoritarian and Permissive parenting, with results showing a higher likelihood of continuity in same gender parental relationships. Emphasis was put on the relationship of father and son, to take on parenting norms that were taught (Campbell & Gilmore, 2007). Results for Authoritative parenting suggested that it varies according to individual perceptions, and an evident cultural shift was portrayed as parents were rated to be more Authoritative and Permissive compared to Authoritarian PS (Campbell & Gilmore, 2007). Studies supporting the generational shift of PS were also found in the Alonso-Stuyck (2019), Garcia et al., (2020) and McCullough et al., (2014) studies.

Limitations of the study were that it was centred around the Australian population (with a higher level of education). As a result, it disregards developing countries' perspectives of parenting from a lower socio-economic lens. Furthermore, positive outcomes of Authoritative parenting were not explored in depth. Indigenous factors like single-headed/child-headed households, the impact of extended family being the caregiver (grandparents, aunt, etc) for children in multicultural environments needed exploration.

Taking the aforementioned articles' limitations into account, studies by Akhtar et al., (2017) and Gibson and Francis (2019) look at the impact of joint families, with the presence of grandparents being a factor in parenting styles growing up. According to Akhtar et al., (2017) ($n=297$), closeness to a grandparent was proven to be a buffer and protective factor towards negative family conditions. To establish this finding, they looked at the joint family of 3 generations. The children who participated were older than the age of 13 (Akhtar et al., 2017). This quantitative study made use of regression analyses while taking samples from cities in

Pakistan. Findings of this study were suggestive of emotional closeness to grandparents being a protective factor to a child's social competence, having more appropriate Authoritative parenting between the mother and child, and a factor of resilience from an uninvolved/withdrawal paternal relationship (if closeness to grandparents is present) (Akhtar et al., 2017). Similar to the aforementioned articles, they used 2 versions of the PAQ (Buri, 1991), to measure parenting. To look at the development of social competence and assess emotional closeness, the *Matson Evaluation of Social Skills for Youngsters (MESSY)* (Matson et al., 1983) and the *Affectual Solidarity Index (ASI)* (Mills et al., 2001) were used.

The study by Gibson & Francis (2019) also takes the factor of joint families into account, by aiming to look at the development of maladaptive schemas concerning parenting schemas and practices. This article, as well as previous articles has taken factors of gender into account by separating mother and father data to determine differences adequately (Alonso-Stuyck, 2019; Akhtar et al., 2017; Campbell & Gilmore, 2007; Garcia et al., 2020; Gibson & Francis, 2019; McCullough et al., 2014). The Gibson & Francis (2019), study investigated the transmission of mother and daughter schemas (*n=39 mother-daughter dyads*) that linked to parenting styles. Scales like the *PAQ* (Buri, 1991), *Depression Anxiety and Stress Scale* (Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995) and *Parental Bonding Instruments* were used (Parker et al., 1979). Generational results suggested a continuation of internal norms of parenting taught from previous maternal generations. Results showed that high authoritative parenting predicted more independent development of thoughts in children, while Authoritarian parenting resulted in higher levels of anxiety and depression in adult children (Gibson & Francis, 2019). The study indicates a transference of maladaptive core beliefs that has been normalised over time (Gibson & Francis, 2019).

Gibson and Francis (2019) and Akhtar et al., (2017) show in-depth quantitative insights around PS; however, an obvious limitation of these studies is the lack of qualitative information and narratives of these generational continuities that could be elaborated in depth. The studies have all made use of the PAQ (Buri, 1991) as an instrument for finding specific parenting styles among generations. It, however tends to focus on the dominant parenting styles of

Authoritarian and Authoritative and elaborates less on Permissive and Uninvolved parenting practices (Alonso-Stuyck, 2019; Akhtar et al., 2017; Campbell & Gilmore, 2007; Garcia et al., 2020; Gibson & Francis, 2019; McCullough et al., 2014). The study by Gibson & Francis (2019) took facets of schemas and maladaptive thoughts into account. What this study and the aforementioned studies have not done is take elements of emotion regulation into account, which could be a contributing factor to intergenerational parenting norms, as the way emotions are regulated by parents would link to parental validation (Buckholdt et al., 2014).

2.8 Conclusion

It is apparent that the research between PS and ER in SA is limited. This results in a decrease in awareness and knowledge of ER and dysregulation, as it is understudied. Similarly, the Bio-Ecological perspective calls for an all-inclusive approach to understanding the person in context with their environment as a predictive and protective factor to mental wellbeing. To contribute to the literature, I aim to take a generational look at the potential change in PS across generations to better understand the context of parenting and emotional validation across lifespans. This will enable insight towards future parenting practices that will correlate to healthier emotion regulation abilities in children and adults as a preventive contribution to maladaptive symptoms that may arise as a result of all contributing variables.

Chapter 3: Methods

3.1 Research Design

The study made use of an *Embedded Mixed-Method Design*, which Creswell (1999) defined as a combination of qualitative and quantitative data sets, as one is complementary to the other. The method fell in line with the purpose of the study as it aimed to explore the way in which different PS impacts ER across generations by accounting for environmental and subjective factors. This incorporated the subjectivity of qualitative research with numerical data that have been standardised and proven to be reliable tests. The research design gathers and analyses both qualitative and quantitative data (Creswell, 1999). The explanatory sequential design commenced with gathering data in 2 phases, first through quantitative questionnaires, then through a phase of individual interviews (Bastable et al., 2019). This design served the aim of the study as it merged quantitative data, obtained through the questionnaires, that provided a reliable and structured overview of participants' emotion regulation patterns and parenting styles. These results were then supplemented by qualitative themes (Bastable et al., 2019). The embedded design in relation to the topic allowed for the researcher to integrate qualitative interviews about constructed norms on the generational impact of parenting practices and emotion regulation, which informed data on the subjectively predicted relationships between the variables (Creswell et al., 2006).

To explore whether the design was a good fit, it was crucial to address the strengths and weaknesses of the embedded mixed-methods design. According to Creswell & Plano Clark (2018), the strengths of this design were that it provided a richness of data by providing a comprehensive understanding of the research problem while providing statistical validity. Another strength was its complementarity: as embedding one type of data within another, it allowed for a deeper investigation of nuances and insights (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2023). Other strengths were that it allowed for the triangulation of data as it corroborated literature found, with quantitative and qualitative findings (McBride et al., 2019). Considering the

complexity of the study and how multiple factors impacted the findings, it was a structured way to collect large-scale data and in-depth insights without the need for entirely separate research papers. Lastly, the qualitative study was beneficial because it sought to evaluate whether the participants were triggered by the vulnerability of the interview and provided intervention for those in need (referral and debriefing). The limitations to this design were that it was time-consuming, as both sets of data needed to be coded and analysed as compared to a single analysis. It also provided a risk when integrating data, because the complexity grew due to extra subjective findings (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2023). Another limitation was the overload of volume, as managing and trying to analyse both data sets can be overwhelming, due to the magnitude of data needing to be integrated effectively.

3.2 Sample and Sampling

The sample made use of random sampling, with a particular focus on maximum variation in the study. This is defined as choosing particular individuals to maximise the subjectivity and range of insight from the sample (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). The rationale for this method was that it was impossible to gain insight into a SA population from purely quantitative means; thus, a qualitative approach to sampling would provide a holistic view within our time constraints in conducting the study. The recruitment measures for this sample included South African citizens who were Black African, Coloured and Indian adults of all gender and socio-economic statuses, with a particular focus on the age ranges of each generation (relevant to 2021/22), baby boomers (75-57 years), Gen X (56-41 years), Gen Y (40-25 years) and Gen Z (24-18 years) (Wiedmer, 2015). More details on the breakdown of the participants will be shown in the descriptive statistics section below. The study aimed to incorporate an inclusive ethnicity that transitioned away from Eurocentric norms; thus, it included Black Africans, Coloureds and Indians in the demographics.

A post was sent out on social media (including Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp and email) (Appendix D) platforms to recruit participants. Once permission was obtained, the researcher was able to proceed to phase one of the study, which was recruiting respondents

into the sample using the maximum variation sampling method. After sending the study's advert out on various social media platforms, the advert yielded a pool of 38 participants. The researcher then proceeded to carefully select 12 participants by considering that the sample needed an equal distribution of Black African, Coloured, and Indian SA citizens, each equally shared within the generational age categories. Questionnaires were shared following these inclusion criteria. The study included 12 respondents who completed quantitative questionnaires that were followed by qualitative interviews. The reason the sample size was chosen was based on an awareness that the qualitative interviews would provide a richness of data and depth alongside statistical measures. It is also important to note that the data collection methods required a certain level of English proficiency, and thus, the sample needed to be able to read and understand English for them to engage with the survey and interview effectively.

3.3 Procedure and Data Collection

In starting the process, the research proposal was presented to the University of Witwatersrand's Ethics Committee, to allow the researcher to gain permission and clearance to conduct the study (HREC MEDPSYC/21/02, Appendix G). Following approval, an advert was sent out on social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp). Appendix D displays the advert which was used to gather participants on social media platforms.

Due to the mixed-method approach of the study, the researcher took a step-by-step collection approach. After sending the study's advert out on various social media platforms, the researcher then proceeded to carefully select 12 participants by considering the inclusion criteria and questionnaires shared. The study accounted for questionnaires that may not be sent back, as a result, a higher interim participant selection was proposed as a backup ($n=16$). From this pool, respondents who represented the population of SA were selected for quantitative questionnaires followed by individual interviews (maximum variation), this was decoded by dividing them equally among ethnicity (Black African, Coloured and Indian) and age per generation (Gen Z, Gen Y, Gen X, and Baby Boomers). Prospective respondents

signed the forms to continue the interview process. Questionnaires were sent out by a Google Docs Survey of the digitalised instruments.

In consideration of the Baby Boomer generation, a provision was made with hard copies for older generations who preferred to answer on paper. Upon recruiting participants and needing to interview older adults, important considerations were made towards the online surveys that may hinder their answers because of their unfamiliarity with technology. This inclusivity assisted the researcher in gaining valuable knowledge from the Baby Boomer generation, especially with those who struggle with technological literacy or data costs. The participants needing hard copies were identified, and the hard copies with attached consent forms were administered a few minutes before the interview. A break was given between the two quantitative and qualitative processes.

The questionnaires were sent to participants before the interview via an email with a link, and it was then followed by online and face-to-face individual semi-structured interviews. The data collection phase lasted a total of 1-2 months. Once the questionnaires were returned and the interviews were completed, the data collection was complete. The researcher then took significant time to effectively work through the data by coding and analysing using a thematic analysis (Qualitative) and Microsoft Excel (Quantitative), elaborated on below.

The aim of the study was to measure the ways in which different parenting styles have influenced emotion regulation across four generations (Baby Boomers, Gen X, Gen Y, Gen Z) in the context of South Africa. The criteria filtered into the specific niche of South Africans, born across the 4 generations (18-75 years) with a specific focus on including Black Africans, Coloureds and Indians of approximately equal ratios (e.g., 4 participants for each ethnicity, all of different age groups). The PAQ (Buri, 1991) and DERS (Gratz & Roemer, 2004) scales were both closed-ended Likert scale instruments that rate high and low responses from 1-5. The data collected from this step was purely numerical and was collected, reported and interpreted through statistical analyses.

After collecting the quantitative results, the researcher proceeded to conduct the qualitative interviews (n=12) to gather information that aligned with the aims and theoretical

framework of the study. These interviews were face-to-face and online for a minimum time of 18 minutes and a maximum time of 1 hour 22 minutes. It contained a series of open-ended questions to gather subjective perceptions of parenting, look into possible shifts from previous PS, how emotions were perceived growing up, current coping and regulating patterns, and environmental impacts on their mental health. As the data was collected between 2021 and 2022, if participant concerns were there due to prior Covid-19 protocols, the researcher was mindful to take along a mask and sanitiser, to ensure the safety and comfort of the interviewee. Online interviews were conducted on Zoom, where a link was sent to the interviewees 3 days before the interview and reminders were sent out the day before the interview date. The interview guideline listed broad questions (which were piloted on Psychology students to determine the applicability and adequacy of the questions before commencing with the study participants). These questions gave insight into meaningful awareness and reflection from participants that elevated the results of the study. The data was audio recorded, then transcribed and analysed through a thematic analysis.

3.4 Instruments

The methods for data collection that the study incorporated were *qualitative semi-structured interviews and quantitative questionnaires*, consisting of: *Demographics* (see Appendix B), *the Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ)* (Appendix C) and *the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale (DERS)* (Appendix D). According to Babbie (2013), quantitative questionnaires are mostly appropriate when the study includes a large sample; however, since the questions are designed to only “elicit information that will be useful for analysis” (p. 248), this data collection method was tailored into the embedded mixed method design. Thus, the questions being asked allowed for responses that organically led to themes, which were able to be coded and used in analysis. Qualitative interview questions (Appendix E) and quantitative questionnaires are included (Appendix B, C, D).

3.4.1 Demographic Questionnaire

Firstly, the demographic questionnaire consisted of 4 questions regarding age, gender, socio-economic status and ethnicity.

3.4.2 Parental Authority Questionnaire

The *Parental Authority Questionnaire* (PAQ) (Buri, 1991), measures parental authority, or, disciplinary practices in the home, from the point of view of the child (of any age) and consists of 30 items measuring three subscales, namely, *permissive* (10 items), *authoritarian* (10 items), and *authoritative/flexible* (10 items) parenting practices, which takes up to 15-20 minutes to complete. This questionnaire has been used in SA studies before (Kritzas & Grobler, 2005). In the PAQ, father and mother forms are identical, for the assessment, except when references are made to gender. Scoring involved simply summing up subscale scores for individual respondents and generating a score between 10 and 50 on each subscale. The overall reliability of the scale as reported in the work by Dean (2016) was Cronbach's alpha = 0.83, which relates to strong reliability. A high criterion validity has been proved for the study, as people's scores are correlated effectively with other variables (Dean, 2016).

3.4.3 The Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale

The *Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale* (Gratz and Roemer, 2004) measures the level of difficulty it takes to regulate emotion from an individual. The instrument consists of 36-items in sub sectioned scales that measures: *non acceptance of emotions* (6 items), *difficulties with goal related behaviours* (5 items), *impulse control* (6 items), *limited emotional awareness* (6 items), *lack of access to strategies relating to emotion regulation* (8 items) and *a lack of clarity regarding one's emotions* (5 items), from a 5-point Likert scale, which takes about 10-15 minutes to complete. The scale aims to evaluate the difficulties in regulation related to these sub-sections for adults at risk of emotional disorders (Hallion et al., 2018). This scale has been conducted successfully in the SA context prior to this research proposal (Velotti et al., 2016). Internal consistency was tested, and it was proven to be 0.92 (Cronbach's α). This means that

it has consistency and good test-retest reliability, due to the fact that it is a positive number above 0.90 (Perasso & Velotti, 2020; Gratz & Roemer, 2004).

3.4.4 Semi-structured Qualitative Interviews

Qualitative data was collected through the process of semi-structured interviews with adults who reported on their perceptions and learnt lessons of parenting, how they regulated their emotions based on what observations and what was normalised while developing into an adult. A semi-structured interview is a 2-way communication process, by which the interviewer asks *open-ended questions* (relating to the topic) that do not follow a formal, structured list of questions. This leaves some space for association and subjectivity in answers (Newcomer et al., 2015). According to Silverman (2020), these interviews looked at an objective bridge between themselves and respondents as a means to imaginatively share insight into interviewees' worlds. Interview data were used to triangulate the questionnaire findings by adding depth, context, and affirmation to the patterns identified in quantitative instruments (Buri, 1991 and Gratz and Roemer, 2004). The qualitative interview questions were developed by literature on the emotion regulation climate within families (Morris et al., 2007; Morris et al., 2017), the impact of internalising and externalising behaviours linked to dysregulation (Buckholdt et al., 2014; Agazzi et al., 2019; Flouri, Lewis & Francesconi, 2020), and ecological perspectives on developmental context and processes (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). (Appendix E). The question schedule entailed 24 questions broken down into categories of a bio-ecological framework, impact of extended family, parenting styles and generations, emotion regulation and reflections. It ended with a debrief section to gauge whether the participant required additional referrals.

3.5 Data Analysis

3.5.1 Quantitative Questionnaires

The quantitative raw data was analysed using Microsoft Excel by, firstly, using *descriptive statistics* which, as Babbie (2016) explains, "...describe either the characteristics

of a sample or the relationship among variables in the sample” (p. 451). This aided in presenting quantitative characteristics in a manageable form, such as calculating *central tendency* which are estimates of the centermost score in a distribution (Terre Blanche, 2006); and calculating *variability* which shows how far scores lie from the mean. The use of descriptive statistics, furthermore, aided the study in getting an idea of demographic differences within the sample - namely, gender, age, culture, and ethnicity.

Taking the small sample of the study into account, the research cannot generalise findings to the general population, however *inferential statistics* was used, which Babbie (2013) defines as “...the body of statistical computations relevant to making inferences from findings to some larger population” (p. 460). Using inferential statistics, the researcher was able to use reliable quantitative scales (DERS and PAQ) to decipher what PS and ER abilities the participants (n=12) had, allowing for further insight into their generational patterns.

Additionally, *correlational analyses were used*, to test whether there was a relationship between two variables (Babbie, 2013). This analysis enabled the researcher to test whether there was a negative relationship between a) Authoritative PS and emotion regulation; b) there was a positive relationship between authoritarian PS and emotion dysregulation; c) there was a positive relationship between permissive PS and emotion regulation.

Secondly, analysis of variance (ANOVA) was incorporated, which Babbie (2013), described as forming groups based on criteria which represent an independent variable and analysing, by standards of normal distribution, the extent to which groups differ based on some dependent variable. This enabled the researcher to test whether there was a significant difference between authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive parenting for the sample of the study. In doing so, the researcher was able to recognise that PS (as well as ethnicity and generations) is the independent variable (X axis) and the sample of respondents was the dependent variable (Y-axis). This was evident as the result of different parenting styles was predicted by the differences in the sample.

In looking into this study in particular, by finding the specific parenting style of each participant, and their emotion regulation scores in quantitative measures, the researcher was

able to decipher descriptive and inferential data on all participants. This helped to holistically understand them with their qualitative interviews, as well as to make the findings consistent.

3.5.2 Qualitative Semi-Structured Interviews

After questionnaires were completed, an individual interview was conducted and transcribed verbatim. According to Smith (1995), the process of qualitative analysis helps to recondition data into significant findings in order to create order in the multitude of interview responses. This aids in immersing into the findings and intricacies to make sense of the data holistically. The study used a reflective thematic analysis approach, to condense and make sense of the diverse range of answers. The researcher made use of a 6-step process of analysis: 1) *familiarisation*; this involved getting accustomed to transcripts and reading them continuously to get familiar with the data; 2) *coding*; preliminary finding meaning and organising the dataset to align with research questions; 3) *generating themes*; looking for significant patterns in the data that acted as possible themes that was consistent in the datasets; 4) *reviewing themes*; this follows step 3 since it was aimed to review and evaluate possible themes to fit the study, by looking at its applicability and how the themes supported the research; 5) *defining and naming themes*; this acted as the last refinement of the formulated themes to make sense of how they related to the research and if any subthemes interacted with them and 6) *the write up*; this involved the write up in the research report (Clarke & Braun, 2019). This process aimed to take the unique subjectivity and lived experiences of the participants into account. The six-step analysis process was used to generate themes that aligned with the study's aims and enabled triangulation with the quantitative findings.

3.6 Ethics

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the University of the Witwatersrand's human research ethics committee (Appendix I: Ethics Approval). Respondents, following the APA guidelines (as cited in Cozby, 2009) for ethical research, were issued with an information sheet outlining the purpose of the research (Appendix G), the procedures, and the provisional

duration. Their right to decline to participate or withdraw from research at any given time during the study was stipulated, as well as the plausible consequences of withdrawal or declining to participate; it accounted for the foreseeable factors that may influence their willingness to participate such as adverse effects, potential risks, or discomfort (Cozby, 2009). The sample's diversity may have been limited because participants from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, those living in rural areas, or without access to social media were not included due to the English proficiency requirement and the fact that the researcher can only speak English and Afrikaans.

There are limits to confidentiality given that interviews were conducted face-to-face. Confidentiality was ensured in the final research report by informed consent, using numbers instead of names, storing data in locked cabinets and password-protected devices. Anonymity in the final report was made certain of by removing any identifying information of participants, self-administered questionnaires and data aggregation (Cozby, 2009). The process also included information regarding: the potential benefits of participation and of the research; as well as the contact details of the researcher, supervisor, and a counsellor should there be any concerns about the research or respondents' rights (Appendix G) Cozby, 2009). Written and verbal consent (if online) was completed by those who agreed to participate in the study (Appendix H). Since there are inevitable limits to confidentiality and anonymity, pseudonyms (numbers) were used to protect the identity of the participants. The participants were made aware that certain excerpt quotes may be used in discussing themes of the research. The results of the study will be published in a research report, which could be accessed via the University's online library for future researchers and students to quote. They may also be reported in journal articles or as conference proceedings. Respondents were informed that raw data would only be discussed amongst the researchers directly involved in the study. The data was stored in a secure location on password-protected devices and was only handled by the researcher.

Following the principle of non-maleficence, it is verified that no harm was done to any respondent during the study. The topic of focus may elicit difficult emotions for the

respondents, so to support these respondents, contact details for free counselling services and psychological support were provided. Additionally, a debriefing session towards the end of the interviews was made available as a way to gauge whether the participants were affected by the interview process, if they needed further referral, and to contain any emotions that were exacerbated (Appendix G).

3.7 Reflexivity

Reflexivity is seen as a self-awareness technique, as it is linked to analytical attention towards the researcher's role in the study (Palaganas et al., 2017). This seeks to aid in clearly defining the transference between researcher and participants; it gives the researcher an in-depth understanding of the topic of interest and increases credibility (Shaw, 2010). A paper by Davis (2018) described reflexivity as occasionally challenging because the researcher needs to consistently balance self-analysis while bringing any methodological inadequacies to light without compromising the research. Thus, it is not just a surface explanation of self-awareness and reflective ability, but more an internal, in-depth scrutiny during the research process (Davis, 2018). This process complements the subjectivity of a qualitative analysis, as it threads the researcher's voice into the paradigm being investigated (Davis, 2018). Throughout the process, I documented my reflections in a notebook. The subsections below will go into these reflections, while touching on my role and positioning, my relationship to the participants and personal learnings.

3.7.1 Researchers' Background and Position

I was a 27-year-old Indian female from Cape Town, who moved to Johannesburg to complete my Master's degree. I came from a close-knit family that had lived through experiences of Apartheid and District 6. This placed me in a multicultural setting of understanding diverse people. My struggle with a severe skin condition exposed me to medical environments early on, which shifted my focus from physical healing to understanding human behaviour. Based on my own personal struggles, it later led to a deeper need to make sense

of the formation of people's emotions and the parenting that influences it. I observed the emotional dysregulation that many in SA experience, especially with parenting and its effect on younger generations. This impact reaffirmed my urgency in this study's goal of fostering self-awareness and improving future parental practices for healthier emotional regulation in future generations.

3.7.2 Researcher Relationship to Participants

In commencing with the data collection, I observed how many factors of gender, culture and background influenced individuals. It was much easier to relate and connect to the younger generation of participants (generation Z and generation Y) as compared to the older generations (generation X and Baby Boomer). This was due to the large disparity of era's they come from, more so, an unsaid hierarchy of 'child and parent' in society, where respecting our elders, and their advice is imperative. Taking this dynamic and putting a student Psychologist in the room, where the nature of questions was vulnerable, automatically changes the power dynamic. For younger generations, especially those exposed to therapy and reflecting, they became comfortable sharing and opening up, making the interview feel organic. With older generations, they needed to be warmed into the space more. I also found it hard to call them 'you' during the interview, as coming from a cultural background you are taught to say aunty/uncle out of respect. This made me more conscious of my questions and demeanour during the interview. Coming from a background exposed to Indian and Coloured heritage assisted me in building commonality as privileging an 'insider knowledge', allowed me to respond to the cultural nuances by speaking into the language and slang of Afrikaans built over the years. This strengthened the relationship between participants and assisted in developing rapport with them. When the topic of severe deprivation came up in the interviews, I felt myself becoming aware of my own privilege and grew concerned around how the participants felt, especially as some of the questions asked, were things they had never reflected on before. This was seen in the Black African participant (Baby Boomer), who

struggled to reflect on emotions during the interview. Although she was fluent in English, to help build rapport, it would have been helpful to speak Zulu, to help her express more. Through the vulnerability of the interviews, I definitely felt emotionally moved and closer to the participants by the end of the study.

3.7.3 Assumptions and Biases

At the outset of the interview process, I had assumed that South African parenting would be predominantly authoritarian, with low warmth and high control due to contextual factors. This assumption was based on both academic literature and personal experiences. Although there was a strong emphasis on strict control, due to restrictions and the need for security, South African's showed many signs of warmth regardless of the high control. I assumed that warmth was shown in emotion validation, but through the process of the interview, I learnt that it's a language to learn. Aside from the need for validation to strengthen understanding, warmth can also be shown in physical means, like food, culture, music and community- particularly when deprivation's a factor. Additionally, the I anticipated richer insights from Baby Boomer's, as the older generations had wisdom, yet found valuable reflections and wisdom across all generations.

3.7.4 Personal Reflection, Experience and Learning

The process of completing this research paper was challenging and took longer than expected. Multiple contextual factors came into play in the researcher's environment; forcing the researcher to confront themselves, their own avoidance/defences and the feeling of guilt for letting people down. Feelings of anxiety and imposter syndrome arose, due to uncertainty in the ability to properly capture, analyse and report on a mixed method study. While trying to overcome task paralysis, the researcher decided to take on a self-development course while volunteering at an orphanage weekly. After building connections and aiding in the healing process of the children, it solidified her purpose with certainty on her ability to help the

community. In interviewing the participants, the researcher found the beauty in South African's resilience and humour enlightening. The ability to make light of a situation, brought joy to a room, be it a defence. Many of the participants spoke to the researchers' emotional wounds of feeling 'not good enough' or misunderstood, ultimately connecting the researcher to the participant. The interviews with the older generation, narrated a verbal painting of an era the researcher had not seen, and created a feeling of nostalgia that made her reflect on her childhood positively. Most importantly, the older generation made reference to God/Allah in many answers, even through severe deprivation, they had hope and humanity. The conviction of their words of enlightenment showed positivity and contentment, ultimately impacting the researcher and making her explore her religion deeper too. From this came a lot more meaning, wholeness and purpose. Each participant encountered contributed to the researchers learning allowing her to identify with many internal biases that may have surfaced in the process and to deepen understanding of the topic (Olmos-Vega et al., 2022).

Chapter 4: Results

4.1 Introduction

The research study adopted a mixed-methods design, resulting in quantitative and qualitative data. The results will be reflected in sections 1 and 2 below. The *overall aim* of using a mixed-method research design was to investigate the ways in which different parenting styles have influenced emotion regulation across four generations (Baby Boomers, Gen X, Gen Y, Gen Z) in the context of South Africa by focusing on Black Africans, Coloureds and Indians. In the quantitative section, it's important to note that the results are exploratory and descriptive only. The correlated findings for the sample (n=12) are illustrative, not confirmatory. Our findings assist in gaining validity, by specifying what parenting style the participant received growing up, and where their emotion regulation abilities lie, this however can't be generalised due to the small sample. This allowed the researcher to assess how each generation (Baby Boomers, Gen X, Gen Y, Gen Z) of parenting styles correlates to the validation or invalidation of emotions.

4.2 Section One: Quantitative Findings

4.2.1 Descriptive Findings

In understanding the characteristics of the participants, the researcher looked at a range of demographic characteristics to assist in the interpretation of describing the sample and understanding the findings. The inclusion criteria consisted of South Africans over the age of 18, where formulated questionnaires (PAQ and DERS scales) were administered online through Google documents, yielding a response of n=12 participants. The table below is a demographic summary of the participants with the generations.

Table 2

Participant Demographics & Survey Sample Overview

Age Category	Gender	Race	Socio-Economic Status	Level of Education
18 – 24 (Generation Z)	Female	Indian	Unknown	Matric
18 – 24 (Generation Z)	Female	Black	Between R7500- R16500	Tertiary Education
18 – 24 (Generation Z)	Male	Coloured	Between R16501- R33500	Tertiary Education
25 – 40 (Generation Y)	Female	Coloured	Between R7500- R16500	Tertiary Education
25 – 40 (Generation Y)	Female	Indian	More than R 57501	Tertiary Education
25 – 40 (Generation Y)	Female	Black	Between R7500- R16500	Tertiary Education
41 – 56 (Generation X)	Female	Coloured	Unknown	Matric
41 – 56 (Generation X)	Female	Indian	Between R33501- R57500	Tertiary Education
41 – 56 (Generation X)	Female	Black	Between R7500- R16500	Tertiary Education
57 – 75 (Baby Boomer)	Male	Indian	Between R33501- R57500	Tertiary Education
57 – 75 (Baby Boomer)	Female	Coloured	Between R7500- R16500	Matric
57 – 75 (Baby Boomer)	Female	Black	Between R7500- R16500	Matric
Survey Sample	12			
Female	10			
Male	2			
Socio-Eco Status				
Unknown	2			
Between R7500- R16500	6			
Between R16501- R33500	1			
Between R33501- R57500	2			
More than R 57501	1			
Education				
Matric (Grade 12)	4			
Tertiary Education	8			
Race				
Indian	4			
Coloured	4			
Black African	4			

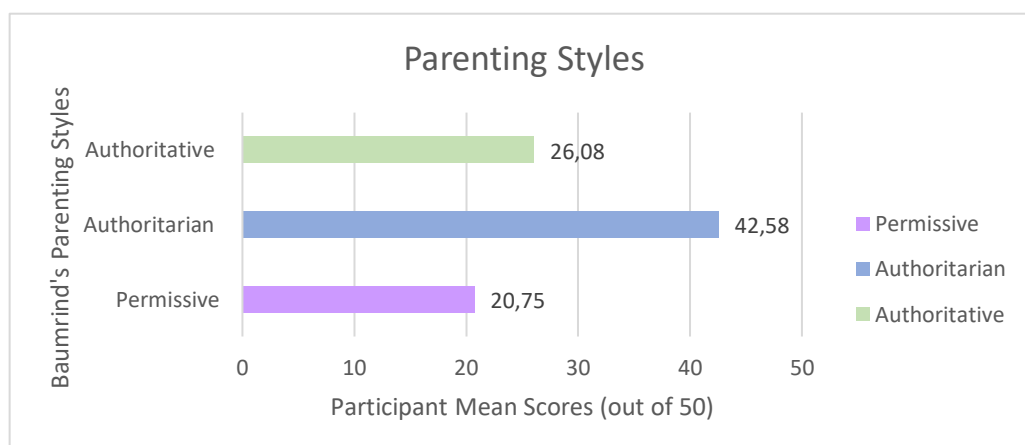
The sample consisted of 12 participants, classified into 4 generations of each ethnicity (Coloured, Indian and Black African). The sample used random sampling, with a particular focus on maximum variation in the study (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). The sample had

more participation from females wanting to be interviewed, as compared to males, evidently showing a significant gender imbalance, as the researcher interviewed 10 females and 2 males. In looking at socio-economic status, 2 participants chose not to share their income; as a result, the remainder of the participants predominantly fell into the lower-income brackets (6 participants between R7500 and R16500). The diversity in income levels will allow for further insight into the later findings of the paper pertaining to parenting and emotional climate. Looking into education level, two-thirds of the sample (8 out of 12 participants) reported having tertiary education, while the remaining participants reported only having matric (Grade 12). When examining education levels, it's important to consider the age of participants, as some Gen Z participants have just finished matric and are in the process of enrolling into tertiary education.

Parenting Styles (PAQ). The *Parental Authority Questionnaire* (PAQ) was used as an instrument to determine the type of parenting each adult participant received (Buri, 1991). The questionnaire broke the parenting styles into 3 categories: Permissive (10 items), Authoritarian (10 items), and Authoritative (10 items) parenting practices (Buri, 1991). The figures below represent the findings per parenting style, with the mean depicted.

Chart 1

Visual Representation of Parenting Styles for the Sample



The above figure (*chart 1*) suggests an overall summary of parenting styles for the sample (n=12). In looking at the findings, it can be concluded that Authoritarian parenting was highly prevalent in the sample, with a mean score of 42,58, this suggests that 10 participants of the sample reported having received Authoritarian parenting growing up (85.16%). The remaining 2 participants in the sample scored in the Authoritative Parenting indices, with a mean of 26,08. While no participants scored in the Permissive parenting range, their answers on the Likert scale suggest some signs of its tendencies, with a mean of 20,75, are seen in the graph. To further make sense of the findings and hypotheses, the paper will look into how these parenting styles are reported on per generation in SA.

Table 3

Tabulated Scores of Parenting Styles Across Generations

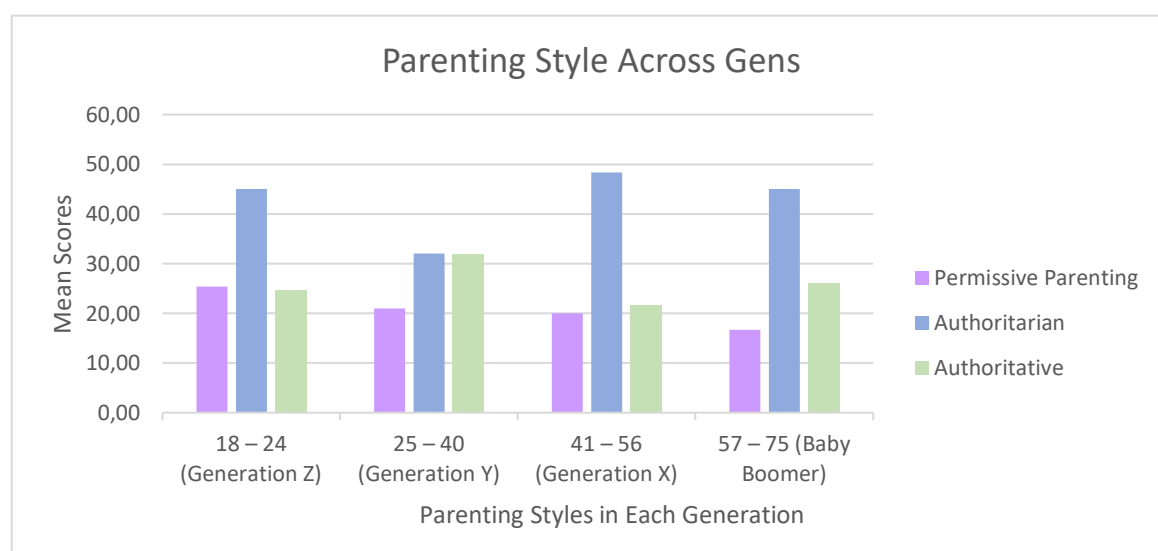
Generation	Permissive	Authoritarian	Authoritative
18 – 24 (Generation Z)	25,33	(n=3) 45.00	24,67
25 – 40 (Generation Y)	21,00	(n=1) 32.00	(n=2) 32,00
41 – 56 (Generation X)	20,00	(n=3) 48.33	21,67
57 – 75 (Baby Boomer)	16,67	(n=3) 45.00	26,00

The table above depicts the mean scores of parenting styles in each generation (Z, Y, X and Baby Boomer). Each participant's answers per question were taken into account to determine the degree to which their scores fall in each PS. In interpreting this data, the total maximum score per parenting subtest was out of 50, this was compared to the mean scores tabulated above. Participants of all generations scored high for Authoritarian parenting (n=10); however, Gen Y in particular had a balanced score between Authoritarian (n=1) and Authoritative (n=2) parenting styles. Gen Z scored the highest proportion in Authoritarian parenting based on their answers in each question (90%, n=3) as compared to Permissive (50.66%, n=0) and Authoritative (49.34%, n=0) styles. Gen Y depicted a different experience of being parented as they had a more balanced distribution of data with Authoritarian (64%, n=1) and Authoritative (64%, n=2) being equal, and Permissive (42%, n=0) being marginal. Moving on to Gen X, they scored high in having experienced a dominant Authoritarian

parenting style (96.66%, $n=3$) and displayed a lower proportion of Authoritative (43.32%, $n=0$) and Permissive (40%, $n=0$) parenting styles. Baby Boomers showed a similar score to Gen Z, with Authoritarian (90%, $n=3$). However, their Permissive (33.34%, $n=0$) score was significantly lower, and their Authoritative score (52%, $n=0$) was a little higher in comparison to Gen Z. To summarise, the graph below will provide a visual representation of the data.

Chart 2

Visual Representation of Parenting Styles across Generations

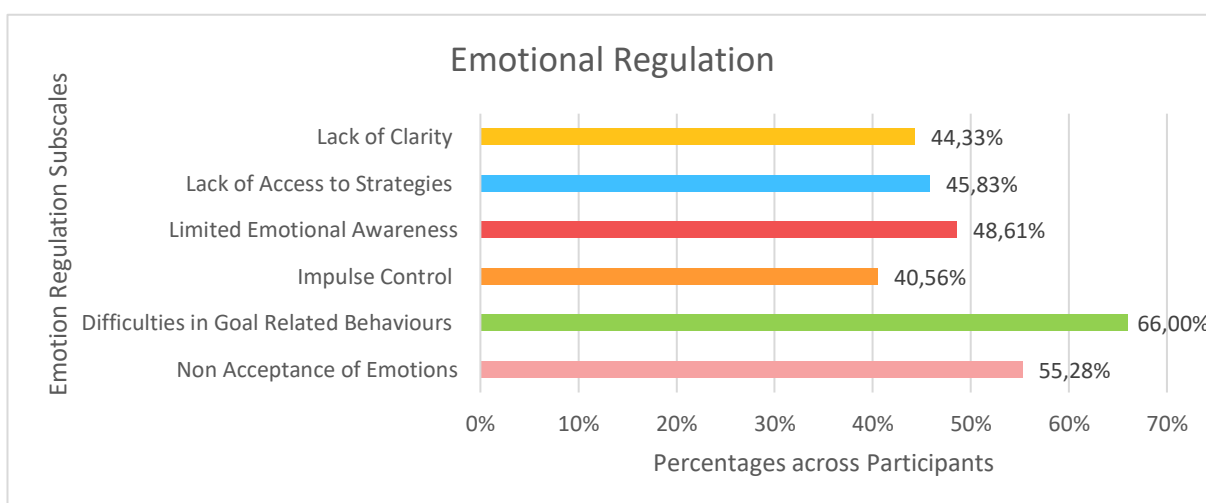


In summary, *chart 2* above shows the clear indication of strict parenting across the participants in this study (Authoritarian parenting in blue). This is particularly true and highest for Gen X, Baby Boomers and Gen Z. Authoritative parenting (green) seems to show variability as it is notably higher in Gen Y, and higher reported on as compared to Permissive styles (purple). Permissive parenting styles were the least prevalent among the participants, and they appear to decrease across generations with Baby Boomers ($m=16.67$) and Gen Z ($m=25.33$). Suggesting that as generations progress, there are possible shifts in how parenting styles are expressed. This will be further explored in the additional findings of the research paper.

Emotion Regulation (DERS). To examine emotion regulation abilities, the *Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale (DERS)* was used (Gratz and Roemer, 2004). The emotion regulation instrument measured 6 subscales: *Non-acceptance of Emotions, Difficulties with Goal Related Behaviours, Impulse Control, Limited Emotional Awareness, Lack of Access to Strategies relating to emotion regulation and a Lack of Clarity regarding one's emotions* (Gratz and Roemer 2004). The graph below will look at the overall emotion regulation scores for the sample per subscale (n=12).

Chart 3

Visual of Overall Scores for Emotion Regulation Subscales



The overall scores for the sample (n=12) suggest that the participants struggle with regulating their emotions, as each subtest above has a score of more than 40%. The overall percentages of the sample suggest significant difficulties with regulating emotions, with Difficulties in Goal Related Behaviours (66%) and Non-Acceptance of Emotions (55.28%) being the most prevalent. This suggests an avoidance in the sample when it comes to accepting and making sense of their feelings, and finding it challenging to focus on tasks when they are facing negative emotions. A Lack of Awareness in understanding their emotions was also depicted (48.41%), suggesting a possible lack of personal or environmental exposure to emotional awareness. When it comes to having the resources to regulate their emotions, they

scored 45.83% for Lack of Access to Strategies. Aside from struggles with emotional awareness, struggles with emotional Clarity were also prevalent (44.33%), suggesting difficulties and uncertainty in making sense of, and experiencing overwhelming emotions. Lastly, Impulse Control Difficulties (40,56%) was the lowest score, suggesting some ability to control impulses when upset. To further interpret the data, we will look into these subscales per generation below.

Table 4

Tabulated Scores of Emotion Regulation Across Generations

Generation	Non-Acceptance of Emotions	Difficulties in Goal-Related Behaviours	Impulse Control	Limited Emotional Awareness	Lack of Access to Strategies	Lack of Clarity	Total
Generation Z	19,33	20,33	10,67	16,67	21,67	12,67	101.34
Generation Y	14,33	16,33	8,67	12,00	14,67	10,67	76.67
Generation X	14,67	13,33	14,67	15,33	18,33	13,00	89.33
Baby Boomer	18,00	16,00	14,67	14,33	18,67	8,00	89.67

Table 4, above, provides an overview of the emotion regulation difficulties across 4 generations. The values were tabulated using the means per subscale. Gen Z scored the highest for total emotion score as compared to the rest of the generations ($m = 101.33$). This suggests that they struggle to regulate negative emotions. In looking at the subscales, Gen Z scored the highest for a Lack of Access to Strategies ($m = 21.67$), suggesting that they might struggle with accessing tools to manage their emotions. Gen Z also scored the highest in Difficulties in Goal Related Behaviours ($m = 20.33$), suggesting that in the occurrence of experiencing strong emotions, their productivity may be hindered more than other generations. Looking at the Non-Acceptance of Emotions scale, with the score ($m = 19.33$) being the highest compared to the other generations, it may suggest that younger individuals may have more difficulty accepting their emotions or more avoidance towards addressing them, as compared to the older generations. This can also correlate to the Limited Emotion Awareness score ($m = 16.67$).

Looking at Gen Y, we can concur that they had relatively lower difficulties regulating their emotions across scales based on their overall emotion score ($m=76.67$). This suggests some emotional awareness from this generation, which will be further explored in the qualitative section of the report. This is correlated to the Limited Emotional Awareness score ($m=12.00$) being the lowest, suggesting that Gen Y of the sample possibly showed a higher ability to regulate and identify their emotions as compared to other generations. Some signs of Difficulties with Goal-Related Behaviour ($m=16.33$) were evident, compared to lower scores in older generations. Suggesting that when Gen Y experience negative emotions, they struggle to be productive or compartmentalise to reach their goals.

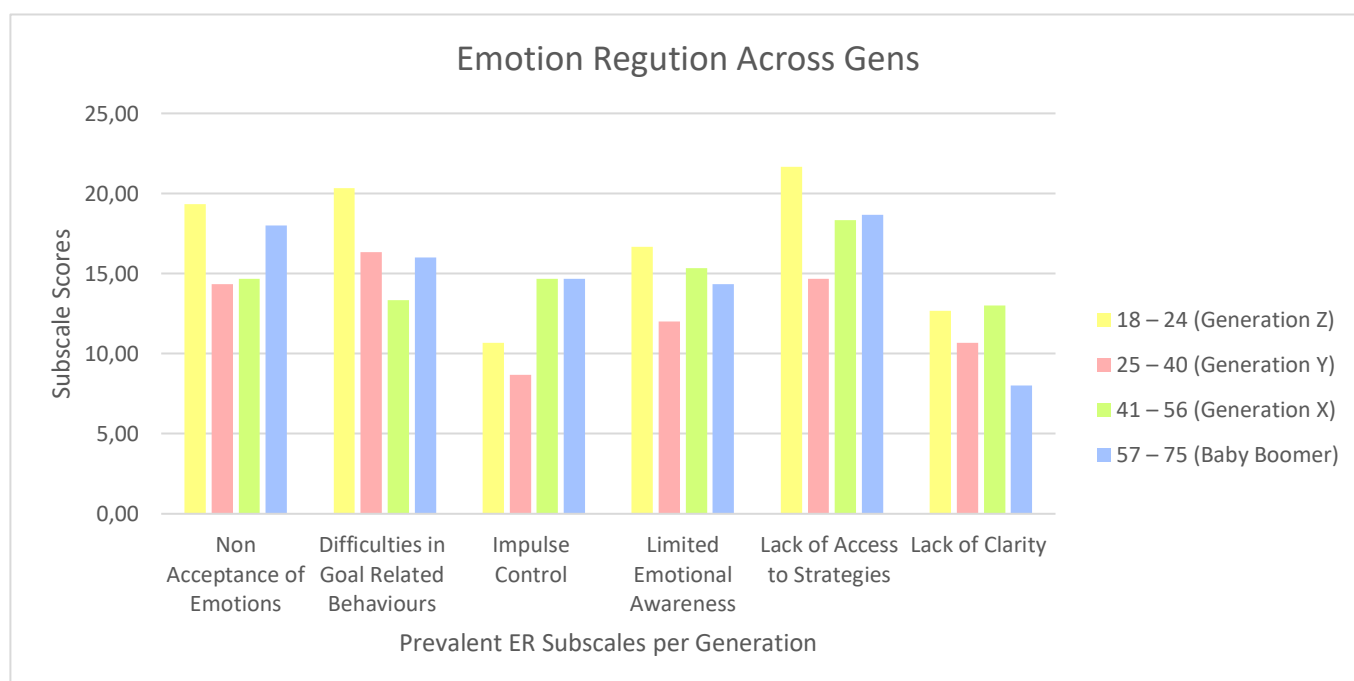
Gen X had an overall emotion score ($m=89.33$) that was lower than Gen Z's scores but higher than Gen Y's total scores ($101.33 > 89.33 > 76.67$). Gen X scored the highest for Emotional Clarity ($m=13$) compared to all generations, suggesting possible confusion when it comes to making sense of emotions. They also scored high on Impulse Control ($m=14.67$), Limited Emotional Awareness ($m=15.33$) and Lack of Access to Strategies ($m=18.33$), suggesting significant difficulties in regulating abilities across scales. Interestingly, Gen X scored the lowest on Goal Related Behaviours ($m=13.33$) as compared to the other generations, suggesting a resilient ability to pursue goals despite experiencing difficult emotions.

Baby Boomers had a total emotion score ($m=89.67$), higher than Gen Y and X, but smaller than Gen Z. The subtest scores suggested possible difficulties around Goal-Related Behaviours ($m=16.00$), indicating that strong emotions may hinder their goal-directed behaviour. Similar to Gen X, Baby Boomers scored high for Impulse Control ($m=14.67$). This may indicate that older generations tend to be more reactive. Baby Boomers also scored 2nd highest in the Lack of Access to Strategies ($m=18.67$) subscale, suggesting that they may feel a lack of effective strategies when it comes to making sense of emotions as compared to younger generations. The Non-Acceptance of Emotions ($m=18$) subscale score suggests that Baby Boomers possibly struggle with accepting their emotions and show signs of avoidance towards them. This avoidance may correlate to the Limited Emotional Awareness score

($m=14.33$), indicating possible difficulties identifying their emotional states. Interestingly, Baby Boomers scored the lowest across generations for Lack of Clarity ($m=8$), suggesting that they have better clarity regarding their feelings as compared to the younger generations, which could be due to experience and emotional maturity that's built over time. The graph below aims to visually represent the aforementioned information and findings for the readers' clarity and interpretation.

Chart 4

Emotion Regulation Across Generations



4.2.2 Summary of Overall Descriptive Findings

The overall aims of the study were to measure the ways in which different parenting styles have influenced emotion regulation across four generations in the context of SA. The findings in the above descriptive section aided in the interpretation of this aim. Participants yielded results that proved Authoritarian parenting to be prevalent in the sample, across all generations and ethnicities ($n=10$). Authoritative parenting was also evident, with the remainder of participants ($n=2$). To make sense of parenting and its influence on emotion

regulation across the generations, a summary of the above findings is tabulated below with PS and ER. The emotion dysregulation, average regulation and positive regulation categories below were derived from standardised total (maximum, minimum and mean) emotion scores in the DERS (Gratz and Roemer, 2004).

Table 5

Tabulated Summary of Descriptive Findings

Generation	Gender	Race	Socio-Economic Status	Level of Education	Parenting Style	Emotion Score
P1. Generation Z	Female	Indian		Matric	Authoritarian	Dysregulation
P2. Generation Z	Female	Black African	R7500- R16500	Tertiary	Authoritarian	Average Regulation
P3. Generation Z	Male	Coloured	R16501- R33500	Tertiary	Authoritarian	Dysregulation
P4. Generation Y	Female	Coloured	R7500-R16500	Tertiary	Authoritative	Positive Regulation
P5. Generation Y	Female	Indian	> R 57501	Tertiary	Authoritarian	Dysregulation
P6. Generation Y	Female	Black African	R7500- R16500	Tertiary	Authoritative	Positive Regulation
P7. Generation X	Female	Coloured		Matric	Authoritarian	Positive Regulation
P8. Generation X	Female	Indian	R33501- R57500	Tertiary	Authoritarian	Positive Regulation
P9. Generation X	Female	Black African	R7500-R16500	Matric	Authoritarian	Dysregulation
P10. Baby Boomer	Male	Indian	R33501- R57500	Tertiary	Authoritarian	Average Regulation
P11. Baby Boomer	Female	Coloured	R7500- R16500	Matric	Authoritarian	Dysregulation
P12. Baby Boomer	Female	Black African	R7500- R16500	Matric	Authoritarian	Average Regulation

The above table (Table 5) shows Authoritarian parenting being prevalent across generations, genders, ethnicities, socio-economic status and education levels. Authoritative parenting shows evidence of parental warmth that has influenced positive signs of emotion regulation in participants. It will be further interpreted in qualitative findings.

Hypothesis 1: Will Parenting styles and emotion regulation abilities change across the four generations (Baby Boomers, Gen X, Gen Y, Gen Z)?

Looking back at hypothesis 1, based on the descriptive findings alone, we can predict that parenting styles and emotion regulation abilities do appear to change across the 4 generations.

Parenting Styles Across Generations. Gen Z showed a higher occurrence of Authoritarian parenting ($m=45$). Suggesting that they perceived the parenting they received as stricter or more traditional. Gen Y had results of Authoritarian ($m=32$) and Authoritative parenting ($m=32$), suggesting a shift in approaches towards warmth, support or understanding in parenting. Gen X showed signs of Authoritarian parenting ($m=48.33$); these scores may reflect them being raised in more controlled environments. Lastly, Baby Boomers scored high for Authoritarian parenting ($m=45$) too, with Authoritative styles increasing to ($m=26$). There were notable decreases in Permissive parenting styles, suggesting a cultural shift away from leniency and more structure in parenting approaches.

Emotion Regulation Across Generations. Gen Z showed signs of dysregulation in cases where Authoritarian parenting was present. Especially around Indian and Coloured participants. Some individuals with strict parenting did, however, still manage to maintain average ER, indicating mixed outcomes. Gen Y showed a relationship between authoritative parenting and healthy emotion regulation strategies as compared to Authoritarian, yielding dysregulation results. Gen X proves the subjectivity of the study, despite strict parenting, some reported to have positive regulating abilities, indicating that other factors (education, socio-economic, culture, etc) may influence the outcomes. They also scored well in Goal-Related subscales, suggesting evidence of resilience and motivation despite environments. Baby Boomers proved average regulation to be common, despite strict parenting climates. Some signs of avoidance with their emotions were seen in the Non-Acceptance of Emotions ($m=18$) subscale score. This avoidance may correlate to the Limited Emotional Awareness score ($m=14.33$), close to Generation X's score ($m=15.33$), indicating possible difficulties identifying their emotional states.

The findings show the consistency of the sample when it comes to strict parenting. Going forward, it will be important to examine the bioecological and protective factors that influence positive emotion regulation strategies despite the prevalence of strict parenting. The

dysregulation scores in Gen Z being more dominant as compared to older generations is to be further explored. It may be posited that based on generational trends, younger generations may be experiencing the impact of stricter upbringings with a lack of emotional awareness as compared to older generations, who've grown towards emotional maturity. Despite the dysregulation in Gen Z, they scored lower than older generations (X and Baby Boomer), for impulse control, suggesting that older generations are more reactive. Possible signs of avoidance were also seen in their subtests. With signs of Authoritative parenting being more favourable in Gen Y, it indicates that parenting styles are evolving in SA (n=12). It will be helpful to explore what the younger generations (Z and Y) think about parenting and how they aim to change their own parenting styles in the future.

4.2.3 Inferential Findings

To further understand the statistical validity of the findings, correlational analyses were used in Microsoft Excel. This was used to determine the relationship between variables (Babbie, 2013). It is important to note that due to the small sample size, the researcher wasn't able to generalise to the population of SA, instead the findings aimed to understand participants in the sample by quantifying their parenting styles and emotion regulation abilities in comparison to qualitative themes as a means to increase the validity of the results.

Correlational Analyses. In looking into the correlational analyses, it allowed the researcher to test whether there was: a) a negative relationship between Authoritative PS and ER; b) there was a positive relationship between authoritarian PS and emotion dysregulation; c) there was a positive relationship between permissive PS and emotion regulation. The table below provides the computed correlational analyses to understand the relationships between the two variables.

Table 6

Correlational Analysis between Parenting Styles & Emotion Regulation

	Permissive	Authoritarian	Authoritative	Emotion Score
Permissive	1			
Authoritarian		1		
Authoritative			1	
Emotion Score	0,003169	0,375615	-0,551772	1

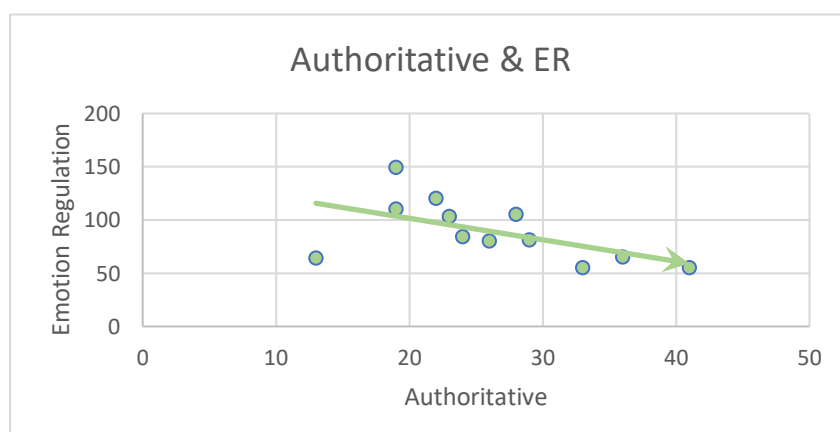
In interpreting the above correlations (Table 6), we can use them to assist us in answering the research hypotheses presented earlier. Starting with the relationship between Authoritative parenting styles (PS) and Emotion Regulation (ER). The research hypothesised that there was a negative relationship between Authoritative PS and ER.

Hypothesis 2: Authoritative parenting will positively impact the presence of effective emotion regulation abilities across generations (Baby Boomers, Gen X, Gen Y, Gen Z)?

The 2nd hypothesis looked at the relationship between Authoritative parenting and ER abilities. A Correlational analysis was used through the data analysis function in Microsoft Excel (Gravetter, Wallnau, & Forzano, 2018). Although the sample was small, the results above (Table 6) supported the hypothesis by modestly illustrating that Authoritative parenting was negatively correlated with ER scores ($r = -0.55$), indicating that participants raised with Authoritative PS reported to have healthier emotional regulation abilities.

Chart 5

Visual Correlation of Authoritative Parenting & Emotion Regulation



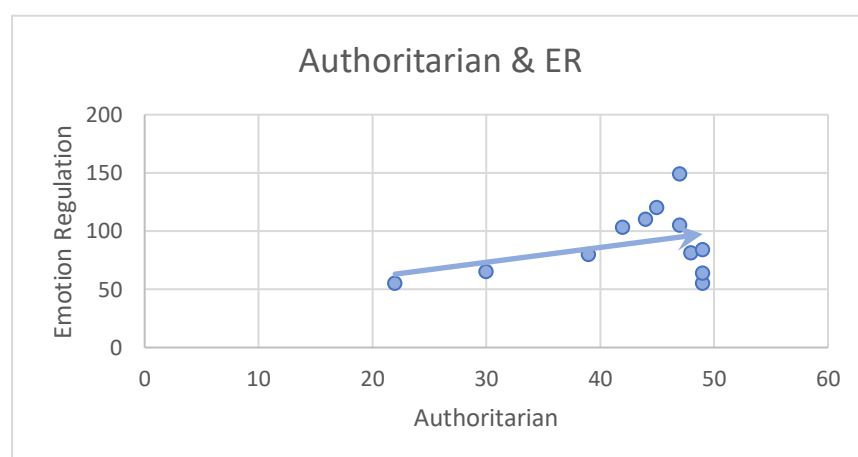
The graph above (chart 5) visually depicts a moderate-to-strong negative strong relationship between the two variables, as Authoritative Parenting increases, an individual's regulation abilities improve accordingly. Indicating the importance of high warmth together with high control in relationships to optimise the well-being of adults. This is characterised by a negative downhill linear relationship. Looking at this degree of correlation (Table 6), the strength of the relationship was determined by the coefficient of determination, with $r^2 = 0.305$, suggesting a moderate negative correlation (Gravetter, Wallnau, & Forzano, 2018). The percentage variance of this relationship is therefore 30.5% of the variance in the emotion score. This means that 30.5% of the differences in ER scores may be due to the differences in Authoritative parenting. The remaining percent (69.5%) is suggestive of other factors influencing regulation abilities (Gravetter, Wallnau, & Forzano, 2018).

The next correlation will determine whether there was a positive relationship between Authoritarian PS and Emotion dysregulation. This relates to the 3rd hypothesis.

Hypothesis 3: Authoritarian parenting will negatively impact the presence of emotion dysregulation across generations (Baby Boomers, Gen X, Gen Y, Gen Z)?

Chart 6

Visual Correlation of Authoritarian Parenting & Emotion Regulation



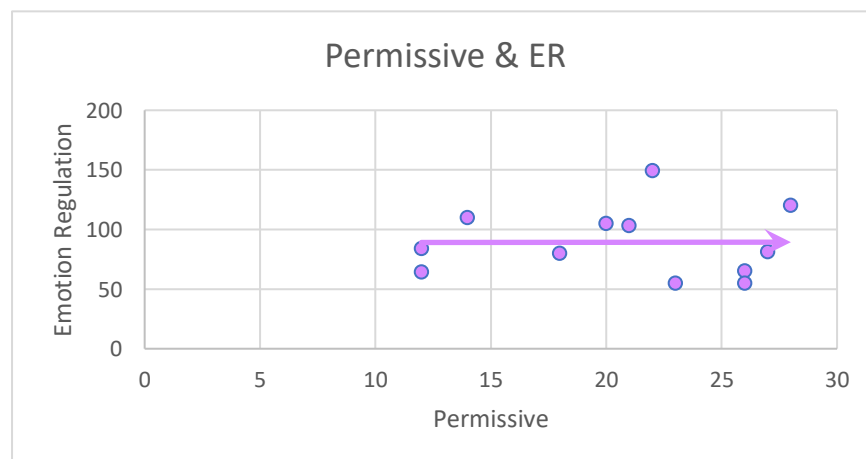
The graph above (chart 6) looks at the correlation between Authoritarian Parenting and ER abilities across the sample. The results illustrate, hypothesis 3 to be true, as it represents a positive relationship between the two variables. Signifying that as Authoritarian Parenting is dominant and increases, emotion dysregulation occurs. This displays the effects of high control and the absence of warmth in child rearing, having an integral effect on individual well-being and regulation. Looking at Table 6, the Correlation was $r = 0.376$, which was a moderate positive correlation. This is shown in the positive uphill linear relationship in chart 6. The coefficient of determination was $r^2 = 0.141$, showing an average percentage of variance (Gravetter, Wallnau, & Forzano, 2018). The percentage variance of 14.1% was modest but meaningful, especially in psychological research. This suggests that there was some impact of Authoritarian parenting on emotion dysregulation scores, but further exploration of subjective factors is required.

The last correlational analysis will look at whether there was a positive relationship between Permissive PS and Emotion Regulation. This relates to the 4th hypothesis.

Hypothesis 4: Permissive parenting will negatively impact emotion dysregulation across generations (Baby Boomers, Gen X, Gen Y, Gen Z)?

Chart 7

Visual Correlation of Permissive Parenting & Emotion Regulation



The correlation between Permissive parenting and ER ($r=0.003$), demonstrates the hypothesis to be wrong, although there is a slight inclination, there is almost no correlation with the emotion score. This posits that permissive parenting may not strongly influence emotional regulation or dysregulation abilities. This acts as a limitation as the sample ($n=12$) did not report having signs of Permissive parenting, a bigger sample size may have aided a higher correlation. The result depicts that, as Permissive parenting is not prevalent among the sample, there is a need to assess the development of autonomy and structure in the participants' parenting styles. The correlation score (table 8) reported to be $r = 0.003$. This is described as extremely weak. With the coefficient of determination, with $r^2 = 0.0000095$, and percentage of variance 0.095% demonstrating that an essentially negligible relationship was found in the relationship between Permissive Parenting and Emotion Regulation abilities.

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). This analysis was included but based on the small sample size, it can't predict a significant difference between authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive parenting styles based on ER scores for the sample of SA (Babbie, 2013). It can, however, reflect on the small sample ($n=12$) in the study, for insight.

It's important that we go back to the *overall aims* of the study, which were to *measure how different parenting styles influenced emotion regulation across the generations in SA*. The ANOVA was conducted through Microsoft Excel in order to determine the differences. Looking at Significance F, the overall p-value (0.228) suggests that it is higher than the significance level of 0.05. This means that emotion regulation is not a significant predictor of differences in parenting styles (Terrell, 2021). This may be due to the small sample size ($n=12$). This assists our rationale in making use of a mixed-method study, to further interpret the subjective factors that predict emotion regulation abilities across generations in SA. Further qualitative interpretations will benefit the research report, as it will hone in on the intricacies of factors that influence emotion regulation growing up across generations.

4.3 Section Two: Qualitative Results

After exploring the quantitative findings of this research paper, despite its insight into the proposed hypotheses, it is evident that the statistical nature of it lacked insight into the idiosyncrasies and nuances of individuals that play a role in upbringing. To mitigate that, a model centred on human development: the Bio-Ecological model will be used as a framework in making sense of the qualitative findings across generations (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006).

Qualitative results brought out many factors and themes for participants across generations; with the purpose of summarising, the sections below will be grouped into overall generational themes, and the differences will be elaborated in the findings and discussion.

4.3.1 Emerging Themes

Table 7

Summary Table of Emerging Themes across Participants

Themes	Subthemes
Theme 1: Socio-Economic Status	Impact of Deprivation on Self-Esteem
Theme 2: Authoritarian Parenting	The Hierarchy, Physical Discipline, Understanding the Context.
Theme 3: Parental Pathology and Dysregulation	Impact of Maternal Dysregulation, Impact of Emotion Invalidation
Theme 4: Creating Stability in Dysregulation	The Importance of Dependable Anchors
Theme 5: Gender Norms	Feminine Expectations, The Empowered Female, Masculine Expectations

Theme 6: The Extended Family and Community	The Microsystem for Younger Generations, The Resourceful Community for Older Generations
Theme 7: The Parenting Shift	Open Communication and a Digital Era, Transitioning to a Different Era, The Alchemist: Authoritative Parenting
Theme 8: The Role of Birth Order	Parentified Child
Theme 9: Immigration in the Family	Impact of Immigration on Self-Esteem
Theme 10: Apartheid and Post Factors	Transmission Post Apartheid
Theme 11: Diversity and Spirituality in the Community	Spiritual Buffers, Serving Humanity, Role of Food
Theme 12: Entrepreneurial Skills and Resourcefulness	Children were a Resource; Time was a Luxury
Theme 13: Pain is Physical	No Subtheme
Theme 14: Resilience	Adversity Leading to Motivation and Reflection
Theme 15: Protective Factors	Humour, Music, Spirituality

Theme 1: Socio-Economic Status. The environmental context in which participants grew up varied, it played a significant factor in their development. Lower class standards and deprivation were prevalent across generations, but especially prevalent in older generations who grew up in District 6, Manenburg and a township in Kwa-Zulu Natal (P7, P8, P9, P10, P11, P12). For Gen Z, 2 participants grew up financially comfortable in Johannesburg, while another grew up in deprivation in the Cape Flats. Gen Y didn't experience extreme deprivation (middle class) as compared to other generations. The disparity of comfortability vs deprivation in context is depicted below, by participant 3, who is a Coloured male and participant 1, who is an Indian Female.

“I grew up in the Cape Flats. Gangsters and drugs, violence, murders.” (Participant 3)

“Growing up, it wasn’t bad conditions, we weren’t struggling a lot. It was good. We didn’t have like the most luxuries, but it was comfortable.” (Participant 1)

The South African Audience Research Foundation (SAARF) Living Standards Measure (LSM) is the most widely used segmentation tool in SA, which classifies living standards (Ncube & Serumaga-Zake, 2015). Tschirley et al. (2015) and Ncube et al. (2011) describe the segregation of middle-class individuals in SA as lower middle and upper middle class. This is defined financially as access to basic needs and services. Interestingly, all black participants shared that they would be living between their parents and grandparents’ homes, suggesting living through dual contexts. Participant 12 describes the conditions growing up in a township with her grandparents, in the dialogue below.

“We didn’t have electricity, running tap water, we had gravel roads, everything was really hard. We had to walk long distances to school, and we couldn’t go to multiracial schools. There was no development for us, especially us Black people in townships.”
(Participant 12)

In looking into the impact of time on contextual factors, especially in older generations due to the apartheid era, participant 10 describes how economically difficult it was for his parents (who immigrated from India) during life in District 6, after being evicted and needing to rebuild their financial businesses again.

“My dad didn’t have a job, not that I knew, I was too small to know. Thereafter, we moved to a small place. I grew up in the apartheid era in District 6. Economically, I would call that struggle years. Thereafter, we were lower middle class in a non-white sense, not a white sense. We were better off than the others because we had food. We had access to, my dad liked sports, and I was participating in sports. We did have those privileges, whereas my neighbours didn’t.” (Participant 10)

He described the struggle for financial stability being alleviated in his teen years after eviction, with a mindset of gratitude, as he labelled the fact that basic needs were met, as well as the access to amenities of sport in the community. In comparison to younger generations, access to food as a basic need was not a point of discussion, as that basic need was met for them. To further understand the setting and priorities of this time of struggle, participant 10 defines the need for restrictions, lack of digital entertainment and having to work. Priorities were education and food in this era.

“In District 6, we had access to gangsters, and bad places were around us. So, we had very strict hours. We were only allowed outside during daytime hours. Once the shop closed at 6, everything was closed. Remember, no TV, only the radio, plus, there was no one else to play with either, because it was me and my parents. Sunday we would go out. Drive, go fishing, go visit family. Priorities were food and education.” (Participant 10)

Impact of Deprivation on Self-Esteem. Deprivation affects participants' proximal processes as it requires many internal bio-ecological resources to help them emotionally process their environment and aid development (Crandall et al., 2020). This puts them at risk for troubles with dysregulation, which manifests in externalising and internalising factors. Participants P7, P8, P9, P10, P11, and P12 all reported to have felt ‘not good enough’ in comparison to those who had more around them. An example of this is depicted below, where participant 7 struggled with not feeling good enough and needing to work through her self-esteem as a result of contextual factors in her environment.

“Growing up, I felt not good enough. Because we were living in Manenburg, I had cousins growing up in Grassy Park and better areas; they had two parents and you could see they had more than us. They had their own rooms; we grew up in one room with my mom. They had things and clothes we never had. We got hand-me-downs. I

think that's where my drive came from, to do better, to finish school and create more for myself.” (Participant 7)

Theme 2: Authoritarian Parenting. The majority of participants experienced Authoritarian Parenting growing up (10 out of 12).

The Hierarchy. Participant 6 (Gen Y) illustrated the dynamic of a hierarchy in SA. This point is correlated across all generations for the sample, as she describes her father and her in the hierarchy with her Authoritarian grandfather. The concept of the hierarchy limits emotional expression and connection, as a figure in authority assumes they know what’s best, and doesn’t open up the space for discussion or elaboration.

“With my grandparents, you weren’t allowed to express yourself. There’s a hierarchy, there’s an adult and a child, there’s absolutely no need to take into consideration what the child means. The adult knows what the child would need and what is best for them. With my grandparents, we never spoke about what we feel and think nor did I observe it. Not even my father, expressed himself to his parents. If you express emotions, and it’s something she’s not happy with, you really get judged. Almost backlash with verbal arguments and conflict.” (Participant 6)

Participant 8 (Gen X), correlates to this hierarchy and describes her experiences with Authoritarian parenting in the passage below.

“Do it or else. Very authoritarian, my father was very, aware of his physical strength; he’d never hit me. But if he looked at you, you’d better get in line. He very seldom raised his voice cause once he gave you that look, we needed to move it. Mummy, she was more verbal; if that didn’t work, she’d move to ‘hiding’. If my mum says “don’t put the plate upside down on the table” and you thinking we not gonna sit down for half an hour the dust will settle on the plate, you can’t question. My mum would shout “Don’t ask me why, I said so”. (Participant 8)

Physical Discipline. Baby Boomers described parenting regulated by rules, physical discipline and responsibilities, while showing signs of parents who struggled to regulate their emotions. Participant 12 describes her parents' subjective style of parenting in the dialogue below.

"They used to beat us with shambok. That thing, that leather thing. Wooden spoon. Anything that is in front of a person, when they're angry, they just throw it at you (giggle)." (Participant 12)

This illustrates the rigidity of Authoritarian parenting, as it leaves no place for discussion or dialogue between parent and child. Placing children who experience this parenting style at risk to the invalidation of invalidating emotions that lead to internalising and externalising factors (Buckholdt et al., 2014; Jazaieri & Gross, 2013; Roelofs et al., 2006; Sheppes et al., 2015). The passage above shows the norms of physical discipline in the 1970s and 80's, which correlate to emotion dysregulation scores pertaining to older generations struggling with impulse control. In looking back at these forms of discipline, participants shared that it instilled valuable lessons in them, despite the severity. They also shared that the type of parenting was necessary for protection and survival in the context of hardship due to basic needs being a priority at the time.

Understanding the Context. Participant 7 (Gen X) shared the circumstantial reasons behind why she perceived her mother to have a strict upbringing approach based on the subjective environment she needed to grow up in, and the conditions that made her mother restrict them growing up. In the face of adversity and stressors with being a single parent, her mother struggled to regulate her emotions, as the detachment was necessary for survival.

"My mom was strict; it was her way of protecting us from what was happening outside. In the flats we lived in, other girls were getting pregnant, going by the wayside. As she was alone in rearing us, she wasn't the most affectionate, though she was there for us."

I understand now later in life, she obviously went through her own things, disappointments. Sometimes it felt like she wasn't there emotionally.” (Participant 7)

Most older participants (P7, P8, P10, P11, P12) shared that strict parenting taught them discipline and valuable life lessons. Participant 10 (Baby Boomer) exemplifies this reflection below.

“I think the biggest lesson is give kids everything that you could possibly give them. Give them food, they need that and give them education and give them the ability to think for themselves and live with a core set of values. I think that is what they taught me and I think that is what I try to do with whoever I'm in contact with.” (Participant 10)

Theme 3: Parental Pathology and Dysregulation. Despite having support in the participants' microsystem, the inconsistencies of parents in their upbringing had effects on their emotion-regulating abilities and defences. In looking into externalising and internalising problems mentioned in the literature review, we can shed light on the emotional effect parental pathology has on children's ability to make sense of their emotions (Agazzi et al., 2019; Flouri, Lewis & Francesconi, 2020; Roelofs et al., 2006). A pattern seen in Gen Z, Y, and X Indian female participants was signs of maternal dysregulation growing up. This may be due to the factors of immigration and unresolved mental and emotional needs. The passage below illustrates how Participant 1's (Gen Z) mother displaced and projected her emotions.

“Many times, she'd be angry at one of my siblings, but they weren't around for her to take the frustration out. I'd get the hiding point. It was never to a point where it was abuse. It was, if she was really frustrated. My parents were quite strict in discipline.” (Participant 1)

Participant 8 (Gen X) is a 2nd generation Indian, where contextual factors of poverty and the apartheid eviction play a bigger risk in the prevalence of internalising and externalising

factors. Participant 8 describes her awareness of her mother's mental health growing up in the passage below.

"I'd have liked to change my mother's low self-esteem because that automatically would have improved our self-esteem. She used to get panic attacks when she had to entertain. And anxiety doesn't exist, so she never sought help, because it's not a physical illness. She would get overwhelmed and run around like a headless chicken trying to do things that is beyond her, just to satisfy people that she felt were above her class. Class wise, she needed to prove that she could do xyz" (Participant 8)

Impact of Maternal Dysregulation. The participants (P1, P5, P8) all expressed a desire to feel understood by their mothers growing up, the disappointment of this invalidation lead to many defences in them. Participant 1 described the struggle between her emotional needs not being met and her dysregulation in the passage below.

"If I went to my mom with a problem, she often didn't understand. My feelings were frequently misinterpreted, which frustrated me as a child. This led me to detach because I felt that sharing wouldn't be helpful and would just make me feel worse about myself. They didn't grasp the extent of my feelings, eventually, I just didn't feel the need to include them, leading to more misunderstandings, and isolation, quite often." (Participant 1)

Possible signs of dysregulation in her mother, ultimately led to detachment and isolation (internalising factors) as the environment did not feel safe. This supports literature, indicating that a consistent pattern of parenting leads to internalising and externalising symptoms (Roelofs et al., 2006). Looking into Gen Y, participant 5 shared the long-term effects of maternal dysregulation in her microsystem. Literature by Roelofs et al., (2006) spoke to how a consistent pattern of parenting leads to internalising and externalising symptoms in adulthood. The passages below illustrate how growing up in unanchored environments with

dysregulated mothers and grandmothers has affected their nervous system long term, towards internalising symptoms.

"I'm not able to trust easily, I'm always sceptical/paranoid. Then, anxiety would definitely be related, and I think that my mommy's unpredictable rage, affected me. I'm always on edge/conflict avoidant, I'm scared to have an actual conversation because I'm scared of conflict that may arise unpredictably" (Participant 5)

Similarly, Participant 6 (Gen Y) shared how the dysregulation from her maternal grandmother affected her growing up, as her mother's parenting approach was more Authoritative.

"I struggled with anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem, especially while living with my maternal grandmother after my parents divorced. Her parenting style was focused on meeting day-to-day needs, with little emotional validation or check-ins, which didn't align with what I needed. It was challenging not feeling nurtured, especially knowing the difference from my parents' approach. I often felt anxious, worried about doing things 'right,' and whether she would react with anger, which added to my anxiety." (Participant 6)

Participant 8 (Gen X) shared how observing the internalising factors prevalent in her mother was transmitted to her sense of self; she shared how the risk of internalising factors manifested into her constructs in the excerpt below.

"(Silence) Anxiety around a fear of measuring up, uh, generally daily stressors. Low self-esteem, I think is a thing in an Indian family where they constantly telling you why is there a 92% why not a 96, they constantly want you to do better than your previous scores. So, currently low self-esteem and anxiety, e.g. when my in-laws would come over for lunch, I'd stress cause are they going to enjoy the food etc." (Participant 8)

Impact of Parental Invalidation. The aforementioned literature linked the parental invalidation of emotions to be an influence on the regulation of children's emotions in later life (Morris et al., 2007; Morris et al., 2017). By observing their parents' norms and the emotional climate, it puts them at risk of internalising/externalising factors (McCoy, 2013). Participant 12 (Baby Boomer) shared her experience of emotion invalidation in the black community below.

"It was ignored. Like with our generation and as Black people, this thing of emotions, they never pay attention to it. They don't exist. My whole childhood, nobody cared to understand me. Nobody cared to listen to me. As a Black person, nobody cares that you are a child; you don't need to be understood, you're just a child." (Participant 12)

apartheid Participant 10 (Baby Boomer) described he's experience as an Indian male when it came to emotion validation.

"Emotions were predominantly ignored. My dad definitely didn't, my mum maybe she would listen. You conditioned at that time, what was normal, you get a warm 'klap' and live on. That was typical. It wasn't a question of 'goi-ing' a tantrum, maybe I was different. Obviously, emotions existed, but was there time to vent them, I'd say no." (Participant 10)

Theme 4: Creating Stability in Dysregulation. In seeking to understand the coping mechanisms of children who experience inconsistent anchors in their households, participant 5 (Gen Y) illustrated how our nervous system reacts to dysregulated spaces to create that stability and control for ourselves. In the dialogue below, she displays a search for God, a safe space, creative expression, and giving herself gifts. Her inclination to isolation is similar to participant 1, who also experienced a maternal figure who was emotionally dysregulated.

"If I'm feeling upset, I will talk to God in that moment. I like to have quiet time; I like to isolate and be on my own. I also like to do art, but sometimes you don't always have

the time. Sometimes if, I'm really stressed out or something happened in a social situation that I didn't like, then I would buy myself something.” (Participant 5)

In further exploring the participants' inclination to buying gifts, she elaborated on her father going on work trips and bringing back gifts. She described the gifts as an unconscious reward system for dealing with her mother without her father's presence. As time progressed, she learnt that when things get tough or overwhelming, there's some reward at the end. This may be an insight into the formation of gift-giving as a love language. It speaks to the physical expression of emotions, similarly to art. Participant 1 (Gen Z), below, displays how dysregulation affects her internally.

“I sort of lose myself in that way because, it piles up and you can't figure out where the feelings come from, my head just becomes, one big mess. I don't understand myself anymore. Almost like a dissociative feeling of not being in touch with myself. Not being present. It really affects not only myself but the relationships around me, because I'm not addressing my own. It's extremely important that I address how I feel. I try and reflect on it and how it's affecting others around me.” (Participant 1)

The passage above shows how having a parent with emotional dysregulation or untreated mental health conditions creates a risk in adulthood as these children learn to use maladaptive coping mechanisms to create their stability.

Older participants were exposed to work and responsibilities from childhood. In asking them about emotion regulation, the need to create structure was noted. This is seen in the excerpt below (Participant 8, Gen X).

“I used to be obsessively neat with packing drawers. I'd have two drawers where I packed my toys into, they were neatly packed into squares in those two drawers. Everything was compartmentalised. I didn't make the connection until now. It's about

organising. I organise things to make sense of it. Especially if things get chaotic. I like my ducks in a row.” (Participant 8).

Importance of Dependable Anchors. In the quantitative section, it was concluded that other systemic factors influence emotion regulation abilities aside from parenting. The researcher found that participants required a figure that was dependable and stable, more so than a particular parenting style. In ideal cases, it does involve the parent-child dyad; however, in the context of SA, participants in the study also found this through their microsystem by grandparents, friends, guardians, siblings and teachers (Antony, 2022). The passage below sheds light on how the gender norms are shifting per parenting style, as participant 2 (Gen Z) speaks into the importance of the father-daughter relationship.

“I think my dad was softer (giggle). I would show certain emotions, he would have more understanding. I don't know if it's just me or maybe I was closer to him. He was definitely softer. My mom would just be shocked at tears.” (Participant 2)

This shows a shift in gender norms but also an attentiveness from her father growing up, which could be why her emotion regulation score came to average regulation compared to the rest of her generation. Without the consistency of the parent-child dyad, participant 1 (Gen Z) found that anchor in her friends and siblings, shown in the excerpt below, depicting how extended sources of your microsystem may aid positive regulation.

“My siblings and friends played a significant role in my support structure. At one point, they became more important to me than my family because I felt safe and supported around them. I felt like I could honestly express myself, they'd always be very understanding and always be there” (Participant 1)

Theme 5: Gender Norms. Participants shared various gender norms that arose throughout all generations. This was seen in traditional masculine and feminine roles towards what was expected from each gender across cultures.

Feminine Expectations. Abiding by feminine roles was seen especially in Black African and Indian participants, this is exemplified by participant 2's maternal grandmother, who raised her (passage below). As well as in participant 1, where the girls are expected to fulfil Indian traditional feminine roles.

"There are many expectations with my grandmother as a girl. The going out, the cooking, how you do certain things and look just because you're a girl." (Participant 2).

"My sisters and I were expected to help in the kitchen, but my brother and father never was. I always thought that's normal in all families." (Participant 1).

Participants 1 and 2 also shared the impact of gender on discipline, as their fathers' approach to them as girls was softer in comparison. The passage below depicts the difference in parenting styles based on gender.

"The discipline we received from my parents was different; my dad was harder on my brother, sometimes hitting him, but didn't treat us girls that way. My mom (giggle) disciplined us similarly when we didn't follow instructions or when she was frustrated. She'd shout, throw something, or threaten to hit us, it wasn't extreme." (Participant 1)

In Gen X, Black African (P9) and Indian (P8) participants displayed similar norms as compared to Coloured Participants.

"Girls were expected to do the chores, the boys were not expected to, but it differs from house to house." (Participant 9)

"Boys can do whatever they want to; girls have to be in the kitchen. Girls have to play with cups and saucers and spoons and pots and pans, boys get to play with cars and trucks and guns and bats and balls, girls can't play outside, they have to stay inside. You can make mud cookies, but that's as far as it gets." (Participant 8)

The above shows clear norms of feminine and masculine roles, seen in Black African and Indian ethnicities. These roles seem to be more clearly defined in older generations. This suggests a possibility of a subjective shift in norms that have equalised over time.

The Empowered Female. When it comes to gender norms, the subjectivity of these norms was seen across the cultures of the participants. All female-coloured participants in the study (P3.P4, P7, P11) shared their experiences of coming from a home where women can do it all, especially since some of them were single parents and had an ill parent. Participant 7 shared how coming from a single-parent Coloured household made her mother model what a strong independent woman was, who could do both masculine and feminine roles. This empowered her development and confidence in herself.

“My mom worked in a factory and was a working-class woman. As a single parent, she’d do everything. This taught us, you don’t just have to be in the kitchen, it’s part of what we need to do, but you also must go work and fend for yourself.” (Participant 7)

Compared to other narratives, these stories emphasised a stronger sense of empowerment towards women being able to do everything, as a result of single-parent households, or experiencing a parent who was chronically ill, particularly in Coloured communities. It is crucial to critically examine the nature of this empowerment, like P7 and P11 below, who expressed empowering stories of resilience and independence. A large portion of it seems to be motivated by need, arising from survival situations rather than free will. Although incredibly robust, this kind of empowerment functions under socio-economic and institutional limitations. The praise of strong female leaders in these settings must therefore be interpreted in light of the structural issues that influenced them. Participant 11 speaks to this necessity-driven construct below.

“Cause my father was ill growing up, I had to do everything, my late mother used to say, you’re responsible enough to do it, and you must show your siblings that you’re capable. I was the eldest, I needed to take responsibility.” (Participant 11)

Masculine Expectations. There were evident gender norms addressed by male participants 3 and 10. This is related to emotional expression and regulation. The passage by participant 3 (Gen Z), below, speaks to masculine expectations.

“Once, I got beat up by another guy, I came home crying. My dad handed me a stick and told me to go beat him up with it. He didn’t address my feelings, just the action. From about age 10, I started suppressing everything and moved on.” (Participant 3)

The above passage shows a clear influence of literature by Morris et al., (2007), as the impact of norms around conflict and emotions influenced, he’s suppression as a defence to assimilate to his environment (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). To correlate further, participant 10 (Baby boomer) shared the inclination of girls expressing their emotions, and it not being normal for men to. He expressed how he learnt emotional avoidance from he’s father, which was transmitted to him, making it difficult to address or understand emotions. The excerpt below demonstrates the construct his father taught him about emotions.

“As a man, you must be able to handle whatever comes your way; you don’t want to come across as a weakling. My mom would tell me “Daddy is feeling like this”, he spoke to her but he wouldn’t express directly to us. Vulnerability didn’t come to him easily. When my mom passed away, I asked him about relocating to Johannesburg, he said “okay, if that’s what you want to do”. Then I heard him mumbling in the passage, “she left me, now everyone is leaving”. That’s how he expressed it, I heard him anyway and decided not to go. That was my objective call (giggle).” (Participant 10)

The above describes how the concept of the hierarchy in parent-child relationships plays out. It also gives insight into how difficult it is for men to express emotional vulnerability in society, even in later life relationships between father and son.

Theme 6: The Extended Family and Community. For Gen Z and Y, the role of their siblings, friends and extended family played an important role in gaining support structures and raising them that aided in developmentally generative processes. In comparison, for Gen X and Baby Boomers, more emphasis was put on the extended community as family and resources. This will be explored below.

The Microsystem for Younger Generations. When it came to upbringing, similarly to Gen Z, Coloured and Indian participants stated that their parents and siblings specifically raised them, but it didn't extend to their grandparents as much as Black African participants did. Indian and Coloured participants' extended family had a smaller part in raising them; however, they did play a role in instilling values growing up. This is depicted below by Gen Y participant 4 (Coloured) and participant 6 (Black African).

“My parents were the main ones; our family members also played a role because we're very family-oriented. All the family members contributed to our values and respect. My big sister taught me a lot of things like responsibility, pursuing your dreams, and working hard.” (Participant 4)

Participant 4 shows the role extended family and siblings play on a microsystem level by how they construct characteristics and values in life. While participant 6 (below) paints an image of the bigger role extended family plays in Black African upbringings, supporting the notion of having that 'dependable anchor' as touched on earlier above.

“The first six years of my life, I lived in a township, still middle-class, but we were in a township raised by my paternal grandparents. My mother was working in another province. My father was here but he lived in a suburb. The idea was that I stay with my

grandparents because, I grew up with my cousins and have aunts and grandparents around for maternal energy. (Participant 6)

The excerpt illustrates how subjective context and family upbringings can be. Despite growing up away from her mother, she received that nurturance and warmth from her paternal grandmother and aunts, while having the company of her cousins. This early experience of having dependable figures of warmth may have been buffers that shaped positive regulation scores. The quote below gives insight into what skills she learnt from her grandparents growing up and how defined roles of warmth (grandmom and aunt) and control (grandfather) were given to her growing up, to aid in the development of Authoritative parenting.

“My grandparents were more of teaching of day-to-day rules, wash the dishes, and chores. My grandfather was the disciplinarian, he was intentional about instilling rules in me and my cousins. My grandmother nurtured us. That's the role that she played. She always wanted to make sure we ate (smiles). My aunt, was also like a mother.”
(Participant 6)

The Resourceful Community for Older Generations. Older generations gave more importance to the extended family and community in raising them. As compared to younger generations, whose nuclear family and friends played a more important role. This excluded the Black Africans from all generations, as their grandparents played a larger role in their upbringing compared to other ethnicities. In environments where marginalised communities struggled socio-economically, the community and its people became their resource. This is illustrated in the excerpt by participant 10 (Baby Boomer). In a time when people were establishing themselves, the community acted as a buffer.

“It was a community setup, where you knew your neighbours and customers, because we were in the shop. Anyone could reprimand you and watch you. You can ask anyone for help at some point. The mosques were nearby. If there was an issue that my dad

was struggling with, he'd speak to people, they assisted "doen dit so, so they had advisors." (Participant 10)

The passage from Participant 8 (Gen X), below, paints an image of how close-knit the community was back then, as the neighbour, who also happened to work in the participant's father's shop, assisted her in her developmental needs.

"Aunty F was like my second mother; she helped my father run his business. She used to work in a clothing factory and would often have offcuts of material, so I ended up getting clothes that was mix and match from pieces of clothes. Today you would call it weird, back then, you would call it a necessity. My mother didn't have a lot of time for me, in the mornings we used to get done and had to go to the shop and Aunty F used to brush my hair and make sure I had what I needed. She was the first person I'd go to, then my mother." (Participant 8)

The passage above not only illustrates the togetherness of the community back then but also the individualised empathy to help one another out. She also touched on a theme of resourcefulness (making clothes out of offcuts) that was needed to survive in difficult financial times. Baby Boomers illustrate a deeper togetherness with their community as compared to today, where there's been a shift to internal circles for support.

Theme 7: The Shift in Parenting. Research by Moscrip (2019) and Seemiller & Grace (2016) suggests that because of the shift in generations, there will be an inclination towards positive parenting. This was noted in participants' perceptions of the shift; however, differences were seen in the understanding of positive parenting since Gen Z and Y had an awareness of the psychological aspects of it due to access to therapy and social media. As compared to Gen X and Baby Boomers, who found the shift very vast in comparison to how they grew up.

Open Communication and the Digital Era. All Gen Z's reported on having strict PS; they did, however, communicate changes they aim to make as parents in the future.

Participants expressed a desire to have open communication with their parents, as Authoritarian parenting does not foster it. Even though they showed signs of dysregulation, there was a focus on core values of family, close relationships with family/ friends and emotional support (Wiedmer, 2015). They, however, did not perceive their parents as their close friends, contrary to research by Seemiller & Grace (2016). This shift is seen in an excerpt of participant 1 below.

“Information is more readily available now. I think, they'd be more mindful, they'd be more hesitant to hit their child and rather try understanding their behaviour. Maybe more patient and we'll bring them up with understanding reason behind restrictions and make it be known verbally rather than physically.” (Participant 1).

Similarly to Gen Z, Gen Y participants shared that there was a shift in parenting as compared to their parents' style of parenting, to a space where more communication and understanding were present, especially due to the access to knowledge and expertise digitally. Making reference to the spectrum of gentle and positive parenting approaches, as well as the need to strike a balance of control and warmth with them. They also spoke to the importance of humanising children, something not considered in past generations.

“There is a shift between millennials and gentle parenting. Not hitting their children, on how they raised their kids, compared to how we were raised. There's a fine line between gentle parenting with discipline and just gentle parenting. Parents are going to try gentle parenting, but they will find it really hard to find that balance and implement it with discipline. There's the sweet spot, and that's a balance you need. That's hard because we obviously don't want to do what our parents did to us, but we also don't want to be too soft where they don't have any boundaries and discipline. We just need to find the balance.” (Participant 5)

The Transition to a Different Era. Older participants reported having shifted their styles of parenting when they had children, to an approach with less physical discipline. They shared a change where they felt more attuned to their children as compared to their parents. More emphasis was put on the transmission of values and morals for future generations, as compared to emotional understanding. Described in the passage below (participant 8).

“(Laughs) I feel that I’m a strict parent, I do allow my kids leeway. Every generation feels that there were things that could have been changed, with every generation they will change it, in some cases, it will be for the better and in other cases not. I hope that the future generation, especially with my kids, that they see the wisdom in the decisions that I made and they responsibly make decisions with their kids that won’t be to their kids’ detriment. I don’t think any parent makes decisions to hurt their kids, I don’t think any sane parent would do that.” (Participant 8)

Having children of their own, their hopes for a shift in the future were based on values and morals they hope they would take into their future. In the case of Baby Boomers, who came from an era of rules, responsibilities, deprivation and a lack of technology, subjective opinions around parenting were based on exposure. For participants who struggled to assimilate to a digital era, they reported on parenting in today’s time from a space where it seemed foreign to them. This is shown in the passage by participant 11 below.

“Today, everybody’s busy with their phones, with their social media and being that way, the world is going. What the parents do today is give the child a phone in the hand as well. As a babysitter, as a calming down, as a shut up, as out of my hair. That is what they do.” (Participant 11)

This perspective comes from her exposure and comparison to seeing children grow up in her community in a different era. Participant 10 shows the subjectivity of this topic in the context of SA, as he has managed to assimilate to the era, while being open to learning about

it, acting as a bio-ecological resource that's developmentally generative (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). Allowing his perceptions of parenting to change over time, as illustrated in the upcoming passage.

“Things are different now; you've got access to social stuff. Kids from small are a lot more expressive, because the way the system is, about engaging, getting them to talk and express themselves. Now small kids are making their own decisions, whereas in our case, believe it or not, we had difficulty with decision making because we weren't too sure of ourselves. We had self-doubts in decisions or we'd look for confirmation of decisions, that came later in young adulthood. So, that skill you have to learn, to be sure of yourself and be confident in your decisions. I think there's a lot more openness. People are having dialogue. I think we're teaching kids from small already to make their own decisions” (Participant 10)

Similarly to findings discussed in the younger generations, participant 10 made note of the openness and change in dialogue when it comes to communication. He made a point of this change in education systems and at home. Interestingly, he pointed to decision making and how it was difficult for them growing up, as a result of the hierarchy of Authoritarian parenting. This parenting style doesn't allow autonomy for some children based on the fact that they know best, and that rules and instructions should not be questioned; they should be followed. Resulting in a loss of autonomy, growing up. This is context specific, as the Coloured female participants in older generations reported to work and take on household responsibilities with a sense of empowerment and capability in their decisions.

The Alchemist: Authoritative Parenting. As the majority of the participants scored high on Authoritarian parenting, it was important to include what Authoritative parenting looks like in the context of SA to exemplify the shift. Participants 6 and 4 reported having experienced Authoritative parenting growing up. Participant 6 describes her parents in themes of

communication, love and warmth and how she would carry their parenting methods forward to her children.

“I really idolise my parents. I feel like they did a good job. Their parenting has even gotten better over the years. They used negotiating. How do you feel about doing it? Would you like to do it? But there's still that firmness of, we cannot make a decision, because you want it to go this way. They had a nice balance between keeping autonomy and we know what's best for you. At the same time, we hear you if you say something's not working out. I think I'd still keep it the same, negotiate, hearing my kids out, not hitting them, maybe more calmer conversations. I learned a lot of unconditional love from my parents (Participant 6).

Theme 8: The Role of Birth Order. The impact of birth order on an individual's upbringing played a role in their processing of their environment. Gen Z and Y Participants showed evidence of birth order impacting their environment. Participant 2 is a Black African who describes her experience and role as the middle child of the family.

“Being the middle child, they just forget about you. You're just floating around. Sometimes you feel neglected. I'm the softer one. The other siblings are a bit (clicks tongue) loud, a bit aggressive. I find myself having to keep the peace.” (Participant 2)

The Parentified Child. The excerpt below shows the role of the youngest child in the family, as it displays big age gaps between siblings and the influence of a mother who belongs to an older generation (Baby Boomer) on their level of engagement growing up. This is especially linked to various contextual challenges in SA, like an absent partner, the need for security, the psychological challenges of burnout and parentified children. These challenges arise despite financial comfort, which affects emotion regulation growing up. Despite those challenges, the participant still shows evidence of understanding, reflectivity and awareness of their mother's emotional state.

“I’m the youngest with two older sisters and a brother. S did everything a mom would, like bathing me. My dad wasn’t around much, so my mom managed a lot alone. By the time I was born, I think she was burnt out and tired, so responsibility shifted to my siblings. She was still present as a mother, but her energy seemed depleted, looking after the household and us.” (Participant 1)

Participant 11, who was a Baby Boomer, also shared the impact of being the eldest child growing up in a Coloured household with a single parent and experiencing a parent who was chronically ill. Participant 11 speaks to this construct of the parentified child below.

“I had to do everything. And my late mother used to say that you are responsible enough to do it and you must show your siblings that you’re capable. I was the eldest, I needed to take responsibility.” (Participant 11)

The excerpts above speak to the unique contextual factors prevalent in SA. In looking into our findings, 5 out of 12 participants grew up in single-parent households. Making it contextually difficult to navigate factors of financial strain, limited access to resources, feelings of abandonment, lack of educational support and social stigma (Taylor & Conger, 2017). This put the participants at risk of emotional dysregulation as contextual factors lead to internalising and externalising symptoms. Studies also suggest that children learn from single parents who model how to navigate the factors in their environment with resilience, allowing them to adopt those traits (Taylor & Conger, 2017).

Theme 9: Immigration in the family. Taking cultural diversity into account, SA is filled with people who come from many ethnic backgrounds. The process of acculturation would have its challenges in immigration; however, the aftereffects of generations who come from a family of immigrants are often overlooked. Indian Participants from each generation spoke to the contextual factors that arose growing up within their culture in diverse communities.

Participant 5 described her experience being a 3rd generation Indian in SA. Her grandparents immigrated to SA as children, making the parents who raised her 2nd generation Indians.

“As a child I thought I was different, because we grew up in an area and school, with no Indians. I was never explained that you get different people and cultures in the world. In our culture we call our aunts and uncles specific names, other cultures don’t. My parents could have explained that you get different cultures even though some people look similar and even if you have the same religion. We all humans. Open communication, would’ve helped understand and guide us, making it clear that children aren’t malicious, they’re just missing information. Listening and validating feelings would have helped.” (Participant 5)

The passage above shows a clear portrayal of the risks of alienation and social seclusion that come with immigration in the family (Dlamini et al., 2021; Chapman & Bernstein, 2003). The participant experienced Authoritarian parenting. This supports the notion of Authoritative parenting, where communication and warmth are fostered.

Impact of Immigration on Self-Esteem. In looking at the effects of feeling culturally alienated on emotional wellbeing, the passage below describes the feeling of “not being good enough” by illustrating where it stems from and how that feeling is transmitted down to generations through criticism as a result. Participants (P1, P5 and P8) correlated to this theme of self-esteem.

“I think it’s very common in our culture to not feel good enough. It’s normal. Being 3rd/4th generation immigrants, when our grandparents came down, they worked hard and they were pushed really hard, when you move to a different city its stress on another level, I think because they were pushed that hard, it serviced them at the time, it’s the only parenting style they knew. Yes, it came from a critical space. You need to work hard because they thought pushing will be how they will succeed” (Participant 5)

Theme 10: Apartheid and Post Factors. Aside from socio-economic factors, SA faced many forms of cultural segregation post-apartheid (Welsh, 1972; Wilson, 2020). This can be seen in the section on the effects of immigration in theme 9 above, as well as in this section. Aside from Participant 5 in Gen Y speaking to the effects of culture on her environment, Baby Boomer and Gen X participants all spoke to their feelings of inferiority towards certain races and towards those who were perceived as privileged, during and post-apartheid. Participant 10 describes the aftereffects of it below.

“When it came to university, we’d go to Durban because that’s the only place we could study at the time. As Indians, we couldn’t go to any of the universities in the Western Cape, or anywhere else.” (Participant 10)

He describes the impact of segregation, as he needed to move from Cape Town to Durban, amid economic struggle in order to study further. The upcoming excerpt is particularly interesting as it describes the divide of culture within your own culture, showing internal segregations that were micro-projected in interpersonal communication post-apartheid (seen in all Gen X and Baby Boomers, but exemplified by P10 below).

“My understanding of the world was, there were Indians that were either Muslim or Hindu. Nothing else, so when I went to Durban, I was 18 years old, suddenly on my own, paying for my studies, no support, you’re in the hostel. I realised for the first time, there’s like 10 different kinds of Indians, and they literally thought shit of us, as the Cape Town Kokni’s, the Surtees thought too much of themselves, the Durban Indians, they either Tamils or the Hyderbadi, they were classified as low. Then you had the Gujarati ones. They were the “La di Da”, then it was us right at the bottom, and they treated you like that.” (Participant 10)

The passage above illustrates the aftereffects and insecurities that were introjected into the constructs of individuals because of apartheid, resulting in the projection of

segregation towards others as a means to regulate internal, unaddressed factors (Welsh, 1972; Wilson, 2020). The inclination to classify and rank ethnicities within their geographic regions, which goes back to India is seen above. Displaying the depth and extent of apartheid on internal introjections. Looking at younger generations, Gen Z made fewer references to signs of segregation, as their focus was on inclusivity and understanding. Gen Y, however, related to the impact of immigration on feelings of alienation and belonging.

The Transmission Post Apartheid. In looking at Baby Boomers, the after effects of apartheid place them at risk of internalising and externalising factors, especially when it comes to feeling good enough in regards to Caucasian people (Welsh, 1972; Wilson, 2020). The feeling of insecurity that gets introjected and etched is elaborated on by participant 10 below.

Initially, when I entered the workplace, I was competing with white people. And we were taught, because of apartheid, that we weren't as good as the white race. It disappeared very quickly, I went through the same courses and wrote the same exams as they did, then I landed up in the top three. And none of those white people were in the top three. That was it, I realised that they might be bright but they as bright as this. Our bringing up has taught us other things which they don't have, for example we can persevere, do with a little, fend for ourselves without coaching, we will find our solution and get to the other side. I don't believe those other guys could do it." (Participant 10)

The participant described how, later in life, the construct of feeling inferior still manifested in the workplace, until he proved himself with results. In the process of maturation and reflection, he was able to look at the valuable lessons and problem-solving abilities his life equipped him with, which set him apart from his feelings of inferiority.

Theme 11: Diversity and Spirituality in the Community. Spiritual structures in the community had an important role in being a buffer, creating belonging and teaching valuable lessons. All participants shared the way the spiritual community played a part in raising them

and helping them regulate their emotions growing up, but it was more emphasised in older generations.

Spiritual Buffers in the Community. Participant 12 describes how she saw the church as her extended family back then.

“Going to the church helped me. When they preach, when I read the word, I pray. So that’s a support structure and people that I met in church, become like siblings, some become like mothers, some like fathers. So that’s closeness.” (Participant 12)

Participant 11 describes a similar place that gave her support. Explaining how the community members had separate jobs and taught Islamic knowledge in the evenings for the betterment of children in the community.

“The ustad. Boeta D he was the khalifa. I Went to madrasa at his house, he used to work Monday to Friday, when he comes from work, then he teaches us. He’s tired. He had to walk a long stretch from the station to his house.” (Participant 11)

These factors of support act as potential buffers and protection towards the severity of environmental exposure children had growing up (gangsterism, alcoholism, violence, robberies, etc). Spiritual structures in the community acted as a navigation system to teach morals and values while strengthening support systems.

Serving Humanity. Participants shared their environmental contexts that were filled with an array of ethnicities and religions growing up in apartheid. Despite segregation and poverty, they showed many signs of humanity by serving and assisting those around them. Participant 11 illustrates prosocial behaviour in the excerpt below.

“I regularly take parcels and soup to my community in Manenberg. One day, I visited a house where an elderly lady, about 70 years old, was very ill, and the house smelled terrible. I asked if she had seen a doctor, she hadn’t. In my Hijab, I went next door,

which was a known "smokkelhuis," for help to carry her to the car. A gay man volunteered, "Aunty ek kan vir Auntie help" I say "Ouma moet nou afgedra word na die car toe". I took her to the hospital and told the staff she was my grandmother to help her get care, I didn't know her. The doctor reprimanded me, saying I had neglected her, she was dehydrated, starved and had fallen in her own faeces. Despite me trying to correct the doctor he didn't believe me, so I decided, since I said she's my grandmother, I will care for her. She lived with me for three months until she passed, the day after Mother's Day." (Participant 11)

The excerpt above illustrates the interpersonal connectedness and prosocial behaviours of people in the community in years gone by. While also displaying the diversity and humanity in context. Despite this, older generations not having the emotional vocabulary as compared to younger generations, their actions showed themes of warmth, selflessness and empathy. A core value and moral that was given importance was the concept of serving and helping others, regardless of their financial situations. This acted as a disposition that was developmentally generative for participants, since it sustained proximal processes (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). Whether it was serving the community or the family. This also relates to the sharing of resources (food, shelter, etc).

The Role of Food. Following the aforementioned point on serving others. Warmth and nurturance were seen as understanding and attentiveness by Gen Z and Y. For Gen X and Baby Boomers, the role of food came up as a theme in the participants. As it symbolised warmth and nurturance. More so, in the case of financial struggles, it was seen as a bigger act of love as some would go without food to feed another. This act holds the essence of warmth in serving people and understanding their circumstances without the need for words.

"Anybody can knock on the door and she will always have a plate of food for them. That was our motto: you give, and you receive—not always monetarily, but there are other blessings that come along." (Participant 7)

Theme 12: Entrepreneurial Skills and Resourcefulness. Living in times where economic resources are limited, children have adapted to being resourceful in the home and their external world. Younger generations (Z and Y) placed importance on emotional understanding and connection, compared to older generations (X and Baby Boomer), where survival to reach their basic needs were at the forefront. Giving them a construct of financial literacy taught from a young age. Participant 11 described how she needed to help her parents as a hawker from the age of 9, in the excerpt below.

"We bought fish, vegetables and food. I had to sell it from the age of nine years old to the neighbours. If I hear people in the street selling the potatoes for 10 rand, and then I make my potatoes for 9 rand. And doing that, I earned R200/ 300, I could give my mother from that money." (Participant 11)

Children were a Resource. Contrary to younger generations, who were given more time for their education. Older generations were seen as resources to their family growing up. As participants helped run the household for their parents and worked in the family's entrepreneurial business, they could assist and spare them the cost of hiring an employee. Participant 7 below describes how she would come from school and run the household as a child and teenager.

"I'd come home, see to the two younger ones. I had to cook, see to lunch, and make sure we did our homework. There was a lot of responsibility. I learned to cook at a young age, do housework, do washing with no washing machine." (Participant 7)

This shows signs of the parentified child, mentioned in theme 8 as well. Although participant 7 lost fragments of play as a child, it was needed for her to take on this role as she came from a single-parent household (Masiran et al., 2023). In asking more about these responsibilities, she described how it made being a mother easier when she had children.

Time was a Luxury. Looking at today's digital era, it's often overlooked how technology saves you time in completing tasks. Growing up, Gen X and Baby Boomer Participants didn't have that luxury, among many other factors. Coming from financially troubled times, their focus was on surviving; this took away and inhibited any focus on social or emotional processes. Participant 8 describes her life's priorities back then, in the excerpt below.

"There wasn't a lot of time to socialise out of the home because we were always working. There were always things that needed to be done, so there were no friends that came over, there was no time for me to go over to friends. There was always something bigger to be done." (Participant 8)

Theme 13: Pain is Physical. Being in a physical era, older participants described how foreign and intangible emotions were to them growing up. The excerpt below describes the emotional climate for participant 8, where the only time pain is attended to is if it's physical.

"You talking about an era where, culturally, you don't express your emotions. You bottle it up, put it in a box under the bed. It doesn't exist. Emotions are not the only thing that they could see was a physical thing, so if you have a cut on your arm, there it's sore, I can see it, you bleeding. There is an explanation, whereas an emotion is not tangible. A feeling is not seen, it doesn't exist, because it isn't physical." (Participant 8)

Even though emotions weren't openly spoken about, generations back then found physical ways to attend to and contain people's emotional needs. These gestures and acts of service meant a lot back then, due to everyone's economic struggles. The excerpt below exemplifies how Participant 7's mother would generously support her extended family through contextual struggles and adversity.

"My aunt lived in Manenburg with her kids, and she was married, but her husband was an alcoholic. Over the weekends, there were fights, my aunt would come to us with all

the kids. My mom would open the door and let them in, even in our one-bedroom flat. She would welcome and make space for them to sleep. Always ready with a plate of food. She would support you, despite her own problems.” (Participant 7)

This is further shown in participants describing how emotions were seen through the actions and empathy towards helping others, and in their understanding of struggle. Showing themes of warmth and empathy, regardless of the authoritarian setting. Participant 10 described how the feelings of inferiority in his upbringing led to prosocial behaviour in the workplace and later life.

“I have a softer spot for the underdog. I’d make sure that whoever came from a disadvantaged background they were given attention. I would try my utmost to make him feel normal. That still carries on now. If I find someone disadvantaged now, because I think I know the feeling, I’ll try my best to get them out of the cycle. To better themselves.” (Participant 10)

Theme 14: Resilience. Despite growing up in adverse environments with many contextual factors putting their development at risk, older participants all displayed signs of innate resilience. Supporting findings in the aforementioned literature (Brown, 1997; Stern, 2002). This trait acted as a bio-ecological resource for them that generated proximal processes (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006).

Adversity Leading to Motivation and Reflection. Participant 7 describes how experiencing adversity led to her being driven and motivated.

“It was tough, but it instilled strength and resilience to fight and get out of the situation. While growing up, I said, “I’m finishing matric, I’m going to get a good job or either go study.” I didn’t know where the money would come from, with a single parent, but I was definitely going to make my circumstances better. We grew up in Manenburg, but my mom instilled all those good values in us and protected us.” (Participant 7)

A large factor in their challenges growing up was due to finances. This is addressed by Participant 10 below. Older generations reflected on a desire to make life easier for their parents due to the socio-economic struggles. The excerpt below also depicts how finding meaning and reason in the struggles leads to healthier regulation in later life.

“If I could make life easier for my parents, that would be better. I don't know what knowledge I would have lost if I landed up at UCT, although it was tougher to learn in Durban, as a non-white, you had to prove yourself. I don't know what the hell I would have been, but I wouldn't have been a computer guy. The very path I got to, was due to the varsity struggle that made me succeed, because at the end of my career, I was the boss when it comes to IT, part of the executive. The only other step after that was the boss of the total business. I don't think I'd have been the same person. It was tough, Westville, but it made me a stronger person.” (Participant 10)

Theme 15: Protective Context Factors. Younger generations portrayed a list of factors that contributed positively to their emotions growing up.

Humour. Themes of humour as a defence against harsh circumstances or towards irrational decisions were prevalent.

“... when they're angry, they just throw it at you (giggle).” (Participant 12)

“...children get hiding, but my late father, let me see the stars (giggle).” (Participant 11).

“... my mom, (giggle), disciplined us similarly, when we didn't listen. She'd shout, throw something.” (Participant 1)

Music. Another protective theme was music, which played a role as they enjoyed finding space to detach from dysregulated spaces. These were seen in Participants 2, 5 and 6. Participant 5 depicts how it can be a safe regulating space below.

“.... when my mother got too much, I’d go into my room and play music and close my eyes to escape her.” (Participant 5)

Spirituality. For older and younger generations, spirituality helped give meaning to their reality and their purpose. Playing a role in grounding and regulating emotions.

“...when I read the word, when I pray, that’s a support structure that helped me.”
(Participant 12)

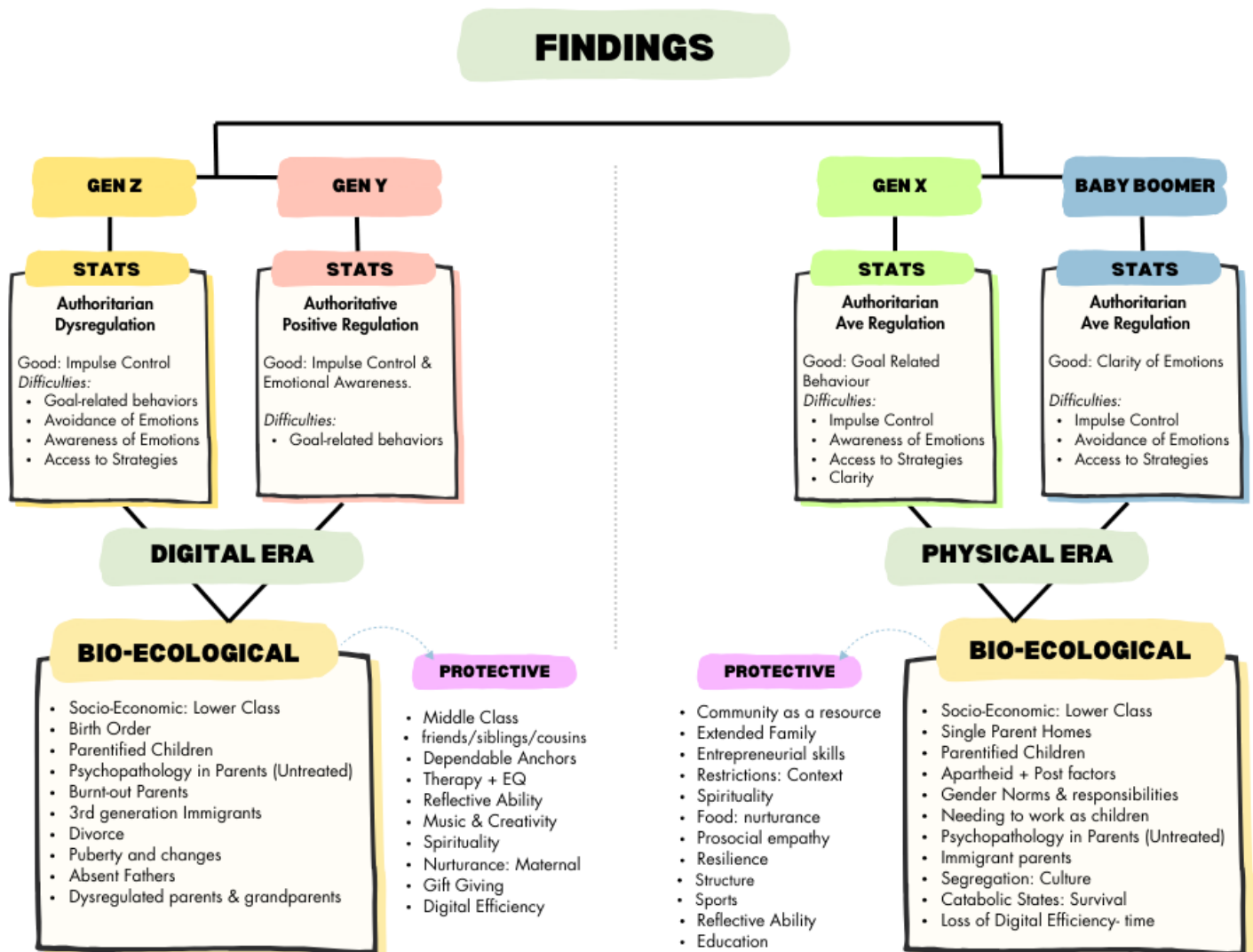
“To deal with emotions in life, I’d pray, over there in that corner (smiles and points).”
(Participant 5).

Other protective factors, such as cousins, friends, siblings and animals, were seen as emotional support (in theme 6) for younger generations, especially. All participants in Gen Y have had access to therapeutic interventions. Which acts as a bio-ecological resource for them to engage in proximal processes. This awareness also plays a factor in their positive emotion regulation scores (quantitative), which will be further elaborated on below.

4.4 Section 3: Integrated Results Summary

Chart 8

Visual Summary of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings



The chart (8) above illustrates a visual representation of the quantitative and qualitative findings across generations. By exploring the relationship of parenting and emotions across diverse generations, the proposal aimed to inform an understanding of how different SA generations learn to regulate their emotions according to the type of parenting received, while taking multiple bio-ecological factors that impact this process into account.

Findings showed a difference in generations with regards to the context of historical time, with younger generations (Z and Y); coming from a digital era of technological advancement and efficacy and older generations (X and Baby Boomers); coming from a physical era of financial struggle, apartheid, hard work and a lack of digital efficiency. This concept of time creates a fine line of division between the generations. This is because older generations needed to face very different contextual factors that shaped their upbringing, as compared to younger generations. Older generations dealt with externalising factors of socio-economic struggles, apartheid and its after effects, and exposure to risk factors in their community, all impacting their proximal processes (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). While younger generations struggled with internalising factors of parental psychopathology, inconsistent or dysregulated caregivers, divorce, cultural differences, lack of communication, anxiety, self-esteem and a lack of feeling understood. Depicting a shift in generations from the need for survival (for basic needs), to the process of noticing internalising factors of dysregulation (Jazaieri & Gross, 2013; Sheppes et al., 2015).

Quantitative findings gave insight into Parenting styles and Emotion regulation abilities (Baumrind, 1971; Gratz and Roemer, 2004). Insights presented the prevalence of Authoritarian parenting in SA across generations, genders, ethnicities, socio-economic statuses, and education levels. Factors that influenced strict parenting were the need for protection in high crime contexts, older generations of parents transmitting the way they were raised in hopes to instil the same values, responsibilities and morals. The older generation of parents, not knowing the language of emotions due to growing up in a physical era, led to an inability to show emotional vulnerability or communicate emotions with their children. Thus, as emotional vocabulary and awareness increase due to social media, Gen Z and Y become more aware of dysregulation as compared to older generations. Themes of warmth in older generations were perceived by prosocial behaviours, food, community and helping others meet basic needs. In younger generations, it was perceived by unconditional acceptance, understanding and communication. This is why Gen Z is reported to have higher levels of

emotion dysregulation. A large factor, prevalent in Indian communities across generations, was untreated psychopathology, particularly between mother-daughter dyads. This created a space of unpredictability leading to internalising factors (anxiety, self-esteem, isolation) of dysregulation (Bariola et al., 2011; Calkins & Hill, 2007; Dunstan et al., 2015; Morris et al., 2017; Manzeske & Stright, 2009; Tani et al., 2018; Rodriguez et al., 2016). Other factors that disrupted proximal processes of regulation (Gen Y) were: divorce in the family, puberty with its impact on self-esteem, and feeling alienated/oothered as 2nd / 3rd generation immigrants.

In conclusion, this chapter looked at the quantitative and qualitative results of participants across 4 generations. It used Baumrind's parenting styles (PAQ) and the Emotion Regulation Scale (DERS) to identify types of parenting and emotion regulation abilities (Buri, 1991; Gratz and Roemer, 2004). It then focused on the Bio-ecological framework as a developmental tool for understanding the various systemic factors involved in younger (Z and Y) and older (X and Baby Boomers) generations. The framework allowed us to break down sections of time, context, process and person for each generation. This led to insight into various factors of context, protective buffers, influences that disrupt developmental processes, and innate person characteristics that influence development in context (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). This section allowed us to address hypotheses, build an awareness of the need and identification of factors that aid proximal processes, while tapping into the subjectivity and nuances of a multicultural context. Allowing a holistic illustration of ways in which emotion regulation is constructed across different generations, away from Eurocentric norms.

Chapter 5: Discussion

To elaborate on the findings and interpretations of this paper, it's vital that we revisit the aims of the paper. The overall aim of this mixed-method design was to measure the ways in which different parenting styles have influenced emotion regulation across four generations in the context of SA by focusing on Black Africans, Coloureds and Indians. Additionally, it aimed to assess how each generation of parenting styles correlates to the validation or invalidation of emotions, by looking at the transmission of norms related to emotion regulation (ER) and the impacting environmental factors. The study aimed to address gaps in previous research, where international studies highlighted the connection between PS and ER, but the majority of these studies focus on children, with less attention given to how these relationships evolve in adulthood. (Bariola et al., 2011; Calkins & Hill, 2007; Dunstan et al., 2015; Morris et al., 2017; Manzeske & Stright, 2009; Tani et al., 2018; Rodriguez et al., 2016; Tani et al., 2018). With the SA context in mind, we hoped to understand unique indigenous (systemic) factors (Akhtar et al., 2017; Gibson & Francis, 2019; Mosavel et al., 2015; Ogbu, 1981; Theron & Theron, 2010). In doing so, the research revealed many factors from the context of SA across generations. Some factors proved to be bioecological resources and buffers, while others contributed to developmentally disruptive factors.

5.1 Generational Shifts

Linking back to the literature review, Gen Z's were characterised as the new age generation of technological advancement, suggesting a digital shift in time and context (Moscrip, 2019). Due to social exposure, there is said to be a higher establishment of sensitivity to diverse topics of interest. They are mainly raised by Gen X's who display a shift from strict Authoritarian parenting, which they received, to an approach that contains more communication between parent and child (Seemiller & Grace, 2016). Quantitative findings suggested otherwise, as they experienced Authoritarian PS and dysregulation. However, it was seen that the increase of digital information informed positive parenting and psychological

awareness for Gen Z's. For Gen Y (millennials), they were said to have experienced an array of incidents (9/11, terrorist attacks, natural disasters) influencing their development (Wiedmer, 2015). Zooming into our findings, Gen Y stood out as they showed signs of having Authoritative parents, as well as having positive emotion regulation abilities ($n=2$), due to their exposure to therapy and awareness of psychological constructs due to digital information.

According to Bee (2017), Gen X was found to be one of the first generations to have 2 working parents. In the context of SA, it isn't always that clear cut, as participants in this generation shared their experiences coming from single-parent homes and needing to step up as children to help their parents out (with household responsibilities or working as kids). Literature by Bonvalet et al (2014), suggested that Baby Boomers constructs are created based on the impact of contextual factors, as a result, it led to a wide range of rules and regulations in society, especially with factors of poverty in marginalised communities (Christopher, 2011; Cocks, 2008). Gen X and Baby Boomer participants lived with the aftereffects of apartheid and needed to reestablish themselves in new communities, which came with a series of challenges and responsibilities. Aforementioned literature spoke to core values surrounding this time that put focus on pragmatism, entrepreneurial skills, self-reliance and diversity for Gen X (Brown, 1997; Stern, 2002), and Baby Boomers having core values with an emphasis on a respect for authority, discipline, and levels of security (Wiedmer, 2015). This proved evident in all older participants. They became resources to their parents growing up, whether it was looking after the house and children or working in the business to earn. Older generations had Authoritarian parents growing up with their emotion regulation scores being in the average range.

5.2 Bio-Ecological Applied

In zooming into bio-ecological factors, participants shared the transition of a physical era to a digital one, while reflecting on community settings, and socio-economic struggles back then. They speak to the experience of apartheid, post-apartheid and the effects of it in later

life. To elaborate on these findings, the research posits 4 main defining dimensions: *process, person, context and time* (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). Even though all dimensions inter-relate, proximal processes are integral to understanding the model as they help identify the interplay and complexity of interactions, environments and human characteristics around development (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006).

5.2.1 Time Factors

Findings on the bio-ecological perspective for Baby Boomers and Gen X brought out the factor of macro-time processes (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). As they lived through experiences of apartheid, being evicted, needing to reestablish themselves in new communities and assimilating to the rise of a digital era. To understand the complexity of factors involved, a timeline was created to illustrate the changes they lived through, as seen in chart 9 below.

Chart 9

Visual Historical Timeline for Older Generations



Even though the concept of historical time applies to all generations, it's highlighted for Baby Boomers especially, due to the array of changes and events in larger society that impacted proximal processes over time (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). All participants shared their experiences of living in apartheid with a struggle to meet basic needs; as a result, they all contributed to their households in some way. They explained the need for restrictions to protect their safety as they lived in District 6, Manenberg and Townships (Christopher, 2011; Cocks, 2008). Being evicted felt like a continuous struggle for financial stability, as they needed to reestablish themselves in the community. This brought on many skills of financial literacy and resourcefulness that were taught to them heuristically. A deeper closeness to the community was described, as compared to Gen Z and Y, where they lived more individualistic lives with their nuclear families seen in theme 6 above. Living through severe deprivation and segregation led to many risks of internalising factors like self-esteem. This relates to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, as basic needs are not being met, importance will be given to physical needs as a priority (Crandall et al., 2020). This affects participants' proximal processes as it requires many internal bio-ecological resources to help them emotionally process their environment and aid development (Crandall et al., 2020). This puts them at risk for troubles with dysregulation, which manifests in externalising and internalising factors. An example of this was depicted with participants expressing "not feeling good enough" and needing to prove themselves. The after effects of apartheid on individuals' constructs were, seen in subtle segregations between cultures and projecting feelings of low self-worth on others. During these times, the digital world, aside from radios, nothing more existed. They needed to assimilate to a digital era that was foreign to them, as they lived in a physical world with a loss of technological efficiency. They also needed to assimilate to new generations and constructs of thinking. This is particularly true due the shift in parenting approaches and the focus on emotional vocabulary that wasn't addressed before. This shows a need for adaptation in older generations, yet also illustrates their resilience and ability to adapt to change.

5.2.2 Process and Context Factors

Process is particularly important in this paper, as it is the interaction between the organism and its environment, suggesting reciprocal interactions like parent-child interactions (parenting) and emotion regulation/emotional climate to be of importance (Cassells & Evans, 2020). Context allows us to look at the organism in Macrosystem, Exosystem, Mesosystem and Microsystem levels alongside the era and personality (Cassells & Evans, 2020). This discussion will touch on fragments of the ecological model to shed light on the nuanced systemic factors influencing emotion regulation and parenting across development.

Looking into contextual factors in the study in qualitative themes, evident factors impacted the individual, which led to proximal processes. Factors like socio-economic status, apartheid, single-headed houses, immigration and gender norms were reported to impact self-esteem, speaking to the importance of an emotional climate for positive regulation (Cassells & Evans, 2020). Some contextual factors, like support of the extended family and community, acted as buffers for organisms.

Many process factors were reported on throughout the qualitative and quantitative sections of the study. Authoritarian parenting styles brought about many themes of dysregulation, seen in children and parents. When parents struggle with emotion dysregulation, it stems from many unresolved factors, due to not attending to them, they lead to internalising and externalising factors, these factors are at risk of being projected onto children (Buckholdt et al., 2014; Day, Townsend & Grenyer, 2020; Jazaieri & Gross, 2013; Roelofs et al., 2006; Sheppes et al., 2015).

Despite participants finding stable anchors in their contextual microsystem, inconsistencies in their upbringing were shown to have effects on their emotion-regulating abilities and defences. This was exemplified in masculine gender norm themes, shown in participant 2 and 10's excerpts, by which they were taught to suppress their emotions by the

emotional climate experienced, which adds to internalising factors like detachment and emotional unavailability (Buckholdt et al., 2014). In looking into externalising and internalising problems mentioned in the literature review, we can shed light on the emotional effect parental pathology has on children's ability to make sense of their emotions (Agazzi et al., 2019; Flouri, Lewis & Francesconi, 2020; Roelofs et al., 2006). This was seen in interviews as some participants described their parents with a certain level of anxiety, depicting a certain level of their nervous system being activated when retelling the event (Rothschild, 2017).

The aforementioned literature stated that Authoritarian parenting is said to have various adverse effects on development due to the qualities of high control and a lack of warmth. Characteristics of this PS emphasised strict rules, rigidity and obedience (Baumrind, 1967; Jadon & Tripathi, 2017). However, in the context of SA, with various figures playing the role of guardians (siblings, grandparents, foster care, etc), it's important to take emotion dysregulation into account. As seen above, one can posit dysregulation to signs of psychopathology in parents growing up (Buckholdt et al., 2014; Jazaieri & Gross, 2013; Sheppes et al., 2015). Also linking parental invalidation of emotions to emotion dysregulation in a child's development, which leads to mental health risks as they may present with psychopathological (externalising and internalising) symptoms (Chuang et al., 2018).

Findings of participants who experienced Authoritative PS, linked to positive regulation abilities. Suggesting that the presence of warmth, open communication and understanding aids children in regulating their emotions with maturity. From a preventative point of view, to lessen the effect of these factors on individual self-esteem and psychosocial development, a study by Passanisi, Gensabella, and Pirrone (2015) spoke to the importance of fostering strong parental bonding to mitigate factors and build positive regulation.

5.2.3 Person Factors.

In looking at participants, there were many personal dispositions and ecological resources that factored into their processing of the environment (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). Male Participant 3 and 10, for example, vocalised having to suppress their emotions, taught by other men in society and deemed socially appropriate, which shows how demand characteristics influence reactions and norms (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). Looking at participant 2, her disposition of being a middle child and personal characteristics of being the mediator placed her in a developmentally generative role, whereby she played a part in the family system by helping sustain it (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). Participant 1, despite being faced with inconsistency in her upbringing, has bio-ecological resources like emotional intelligence and access to mental health resources that build on her reflective ability and understanding of herself. She also, however, is introverted and self-isolates to regulate her emotions, in the environment she is in, this behaviour is met with contempt and therefore it can lead towards being developmentally disruptive (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006).

For Older generations, their ability to adapt to their environments and become a resource in their households, financially and at work, acts as a bio-ecological resource. As their resilience leads to developmentally generative processes in the midst of economic struggle and a need for survival (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). Supporting findings in the aforementioned literature (Brown, 1997; Stern, 2002). Participant 10 described how he's ability to play sport (bio-ecological resource) acted as a buffer to the struggles in he's context, as he was able to engage in segregated environments during apartheid. An influence on personal characteristics, for Baby Boomers was also their innate reflective ability and seeking a lesson in their struggle; this spiritual mindset led to finding meaning and purpose in their challenges growing up, allowing them to engage and sustain proximal processes (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). This also correlates to their emotion regulation scores, specifically in the Difficulties in Goal Related Behaviour subscales, where they scored well.

5.3 Integrating and Answering the Hypotheses

Findings for *Hypothesis 1*: looked at whether PS and ER change across the four generations. Quantitative results proved that stricter parenting remains consistent across generations, but younger generations, particularly Generation Z, seem to experience higher dysregulation. Authoritative parenting in Generation Y shows a shift towards healthier emotional regulation, hinting at evolving parenting styles in South Africa. There was a decrease in Permissive parenting across generations, suggesting an inclination towards more structured parenting styles in SA. Younger generations showed higher scores of dysregulation, particularly among Indian and Coloured participants. Qualitatively, there was a big difference in the way younger generations perceived parenting and emotions, as compared to older generations. Younger generations struggled with internalising factors of parental psychopathology, inconsistent or dysregulated caregivers, divorce, cultural differences, lack of communication, anxiety, self-esteem and a lack of feeling understood. While older generations didn't focus on emotions, due to their socio-economic struggles, single parent homes, they dealt with externalising factors of apartheid and its after effects, exposure to risk factors in their community, all impacting their proximal processes (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). This depicts a shift in generations from the external need for survival (for basic needs), to the process of noticing internalising factors of dysregulation (Jazaieri & Gross, 2013; Sheppes et al., 2015). Signs of untreated psychopathology were consistent in all generations of caregivers, supporting findings on externalising and internalising risks (Bariola et al., 2011; Calkins & Hill, 2007; Dunstan et al., 2015; Morris et al., 2017; Manzeske & Stright, 2009; Tani et al., 2018; Rodriguez et al., 2016).

Hypothesis 2, focused on Authoritative parenting impacting the presence of effective ER abilities across generations. Quantitative results proved the hypothesis right, as Authoritative parenting is negatively correlated with ER scores ($r = -0.55$), indicating that participants raised with Authoritative PS reported to have healthier ER abilities. Qualitative findings suggested that the presence of warmth and understanding from caregivers allowed

them to learn how to regulate their emotions and communicate their difficulties with their parents. Findings also suggested that authoritative roles of warmth came from nurturing grandparents, aunts, cousins and friends too. According to Akhtar et al., (2017), closeness to a grandparent was proven to be a buffer and protective factor towards negative family conditions, which was correlated in the study. Protective factors that influenced positive regulation scores were being middle class and having access to therapy and art. Thus, increasing emotional awareness. Moscrip (2019) argues that younger generations are constantly being exposed to new information; as a result, they have insight into gentle/positive parenting and the signs of emotional dysregulation in their contexts. They stressed the importance of addressing emotions on mental health. This idea is supported in the present study, with participants expressing a desire to change harsh parenting approaches to ones of understanding and comprehension.

Findings related to *hypothesis 3* addressed whether Authoritarian parenting impacts the presence of emotion dysregulation across generations. Quantitative results prove hypothesis 3 to be true; a positive relationship between the 2 variables was found. Results signified that as Authoritarian Parenting was present, emotion dysregulation was an outcome of experiencing high control climates. Qualitative results gave insight into the causes of this dysregulation being different in younger vs. older generations. Younger generations reported on the correlation between untreated parental pathology in their environments and its impact on their mental health, towards internalising factors of anxiety, self-esteem and isolation. This was due to the lack of understanding and feeling of unpredictability, leading to mistrust, particularly around mother-daughter dyads. This was largely prevalent in Indian communities' generations, and is prevalent in several studies (Bariola et al., 2011; Calkins & Hill, 2007; Dunstan et al., 2015; Morris et al., 2017; Manzeske & Stright, 2009; Tani et al., 2018; Rodriguez et al., 2016). Other factors that disrupted proximal processes of regulation (Gen Y) were: divorce in the family, puberty with its impact on self-esteem, and feeling alienated/oothered as a 3rd generation immigrant. The older generations tended to report

positively on their late parents, while explaining the need for strict parenting styles growing up, as a source of protection from alcoholism, gangsterism, teenage pregnancies, drugs, etc. As they came from socio-economic struggle, they all wished to make it easier on their parents. Factors that they reported leading to dysregulation were apartheid and the aftereffects. This impacted their constructs of self-worth and competence, to an extent where unconscious projections of segregation were being made in internal cultures. They described how deprivation left them with a feeling of dysregulation, leading to resilience and a drive to want better conditions in later life. They also shared how they weren't focused on emotions, as it was foreign back then, as their basic needs were more important to focus on for survival.

Hypothesis 4, focused on Permissive parenting and its impact on ER across generations. Quantitative results showed the correlation between Permissive parenting and ER ($r=0.003$), to prove the hypothesis wrong, there was almost no correlation with the emotion score. This posits that permissive parenting does not strongly influence emotional regulation or dysregulation abilities. The result depicts that Permissive parenting is not prevalent in the SA sample ($n=12$). Qualitative results proved that restrictions and strict upbringings are important for safety in SA. In looking at the concept of autonomy, South African participants received a sense of autonomy despite not having permissive parents. This was seen in systemic factors of being the oldest sibling, parentified children, working as a child for your family's stability, and sport.

Unexpected findings were the high impact of socio-economic factors in older generations. As their struggle with basic needs that needed to be met led them to be in a catabolic state of survival (Theorell, 2009). Theorell (2009) proposes that the catabolic state of survival relates to traumatic events that impact the nervous system, due to constant unpredictability, leading to a state of survival. This state of survival for older generations creates overwhelming stress and a survival-based focus that drives them to prioritise immediate needs over emotional well-being. This impacts proximal processes, pushing emotional processing to the background. As it's seen as irrelevant compared to the immediate

pressures of survival (Nandi et al., 2002). This speaks to their ability to adapt and respond well to goal-related behaviours, as emotions are suppressed, and norms around emotional avoidance are evident. This also speaks to the inclination of impulse control struggles in older generations. As they lean more toward focusing on the external world and its solutions while neglecting internal emotional states (Nandi et al., 2002). According to Gunnar & Vazquez (2015), this catabolic state was also seen in younger generations, when they experienced untreated psychopathology and dysregulated parents. This put their nervous system in a state of unpredictability, making them withdraw, isolate and freeze, explaining their difficulties with goal-related behaviours and why they didn't struggle with impulse control. Their parents' unpredictability and inconsistency led to their internal feelings of anxiety, and mistrust, with a focus on survival that's an internal focus more than an external one. The authors argue that the maladaptive coping of their parents led to them having a lack of clarity and stability within their internal processes, leading to dysregulation (Gunnar & Vazquez, 2015). Emotionally unavailable parents resulted in younger generations feeling misunderstood and not emotionally supported. They found that connectedness and support from their cousins, siblings or friends. This is supported by Besharat, Soltani Azemat & Mohammadian, 2018, Damota, 2019, and Antony, 2022, who found that individuals with emotion dysregulation have challenges linked to navigating anxiety, depression and creating a healthy locus of control, by which support increases the development.

Another key learning in this study was that the concept of warmth, that is described in Authoritative parenting, is not the only form of warmth children receive growing up. Baumrind described warmth as responsiveness of a parent to communicate, understand emotions, show warmth and proof of reciprocity to a child (Baumrind, 1966). In the context of the study, there were many other factors of warmth that were seen in SA participants away from emotional expression. Aside from the warmth, support and connectedness they received from understanding and validation of emotions. South Africans also showed their warmth in the role of food, which is seen as a symbol of nurturance and care that brought people together. The

older generations particularly valued this as food was a basic need for everyone in their community back then. They also showed warmth in serving humanity and the prosocial behaviours, as they had the empathy to understand others' socio-economic struggles. Latouf (2008) described how the presence of prosocial behaviour leads to indications of healthy child development and self-esteem.

Chapter 6: Conclusion, Limitations and Recommendations

6.1 Conclusion

This study was focused on the impact of PS and the bio-ecological factors that contribute to ER across generations in SA. The findings show that while strict parenting remains a common thread among older generations, there was a notable shift toward more authoritative and nurturing approaches in younger generations, particularly among younger generations. This shift reflects a growing awareness of the importance of emotional connection and communication in fostering resilience and emotional regulation. This is possibly due to technological influences, as material is readily available and easy to access.

The historical context of apartheid and socio-economic struggles shaped the upbringing of older generations, instilling values of survival and resourcefulness but also contributing to challenges in emotional expression and self-esteem. These generational differences highlight the evolution of parenting practices from a focus on control and discipline to a more balanced approach that encourages emotional understanding, open communication and validation (warmth).

Additionally, the study revealed the prevalence of Authoritarian parenting and how bio-ecological factors such as community support, spirituality, and individual resilience play crucial roles in mitigating the adverse effects of strict parenting. Younger generations exhibited higher levels of emotional awareness and a desire for open communication, essential for their emotional health.

Ultimately, the research emphasises the need for ongoing exploration of ER in the SA context, particularly in light of diverse cultural backgrounds. By moving away from Eurocentric norms and integrating indigenous factors, future studies should aim to further illuminate the complexities of parenting and emotion regulation. This body of work serves to bring awareness to parents, educators, and mental health professionals to prioritise the importance of emotion regulation and validation by fostering open communicative environments to develop healthy emotion regulation techniques. Additionally, this paper aims to serve the children seeking answers to their upbringings and current state of functioning. The insights gained from this study not only contribute to the existing literature but also pave the way for interventions that can enhance emotional well-being across generations in South Africa.

6.2 Limitations and Recommendations

This study gave insight into the nuances and intricacies involved in studying individuals. The study gave a range of quantitative findings on the generations of parenting styles and emotions, while allowing qualitative findings to complement and address factors indigenous to the SA context. Aside from these findings, to err is human. Thus, several limitations will be acknowledged. This will inform key recommendations for future studies and interventions in SA.

In addressing factors of ethnicity, for the purpose of the study being a mixed-method study, it needed to be sized down to 12 participants. One of the aims of the study was to identify the unique indigenous factors away from Eurocentric norms seen in international parent studies. Resulting in participants being Black African, Coloured and Indian, while Caucasian individuals were omitted. From a research point of view, this creates an element of reductionism as it presents a lack of representation, and is a limited comparative analysis with regards to ethnicity (Babbie, 2016). For future research, insights from Caucasian ethnicities would be valuable to look at systemic factors, from their perspective, especially around and

post-Apartheid. Future research should also account for a larger quantitative sample size to be able to generalise findings.

Factors of spirituality came up throughout the study; however, this was not an element explored when collecting demographic information. Factors of religion would give more insight into how they instil values, morals, structure, belonging and ground factors of dysregulation. Participants were predominantly from Islamic and Christian faiths. Further studies would be valuable if the added factor of diverse religions were included, especially traditional African religions. Babbie (2016) calls this a nominal variable. Another nominal variable in the study was the fact that it only consisted of 2 males and 10 females. Future studies would benefit from more male engagement to assess the differences in expression of norms in systemic factors. In the future, a stratified approach to sampling should be more appropriate to yield inclusive and equal results for both respondents (Gravetter, Wallnau, & Forzano, 2018).

A significant gap in our study also relates to parenting styles, as it didn't account for the fact that both parents of an individual may have different parenting styles and approaches to parenting; the study looked at this uniformly. It should thus incorporate dimensions of parenting for each parent, as it would help in the development of a more reliable outcome. Additionally, based on the context of SA, it was found that not only are parents involved in raising individuals, but extended family and siblings also played parentified roles. Thus, future instruments should account for this diversity from a quantitative lens.

Conducting a mixed-method study is time-consuming, as it relies on the analysis and processing of 2 sets of data. Although it gives greater reliability and richness of depth, it also creates complexity in data integration, there's a difficulty in maintaining consistency, and it becomes difficult to generalise the overload of data. There's also a risk of bias in data interpretation, as one needs to be aware of interpreting one set of findings to fit the other (Babbie, 2016).

Our findings represented 4 generations; however, it did not include a generation from each family system. Qualitative results gave insight into how each parent rears each sibling differently in a home, depending on the child's needs and temperament. The study only accounted for the perspective of adults who reported on the way their parents were remembered, to them as children. This result is specific to each respondent and would be beneficial if it took different siblings from each family into consideration for the overall perspective, as well as if the study assessed parents' perspectives of parenting their own children. This would help in understanding family systems approaches, transgenerational patterns, as well as the reliability of each perspective. Additionally, further research should account for the element of temperament and personality of parents and children, as this plays a significant factor in how they perceive stimuli in the environment.

Some participants scored positively on emotional regulation due to being in therapy and building on their self-awareness. This factor takes away from the impact of how parenting styles affected emotion regulation, as therapy may have been a buffer. Thus, future studies should include whether the participant is or has been in therapy in their inclusion criteria. Further personalised factors should also include neurodiverse and sensory sensitive parents and children. This factor plays a significant role in emotion regulation, parenting approaches and reactions to your environment. Further studies could also screen for postnatal depression in parents, as well as mental health factors that impede functioning. Children from parents with untreated psychopathology should be given the tools and resources for them to build on their emotional awareness of maladaptive internalised patterns.

In conducting this research, the outcomes of the study will be able to add to an awareness related to the responsibility of parental validation of their children's emotions and the acknowledgement towards understanding and encouraging the expression of this multitude of emotions in SA. With the multicultural context of SA, in conducting this research and including diverse samples of Black Africans, Coloured and Indians from different socioeconomic backgrounds, cultures, or family systems, we will be able to explore how

emotion regulation is constructed across different generations. This will enable us to explore diversity in the SA context away from Eurocentric norms.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Plagiarism Declaration Form

FACULTY:	Humanities
SCHOOL:	School of Human and Community Development
DEPARTMENT:	Psychology
COURSE:	Research Report Proposal
COURSE CODE:	PSYC7051
STUDENT NAME:	Taahirah Chafeker
STUDENT NUMBER:	2457139
SUPERVISOR:	Mrs. Anwynne Kern
RESEARCH TOPIC:	Exploring the Impact of Parenting Styles on Emotion Regulation Across South African Generations

PLAGIARISM DECLARATION

1. I know that plagiarism is wrong. Plagiarism is to use another's work and to pretend that it is one's own.
2. I have used the author date convention for citation and referencing. Each significant contribution to and quotation in this proposal from the work or works of other people has been acknowledged through citation and reference.
3. This reflection is my work.
4. I have not allowed and will not allow anyone to copy my work with the intention of passing it off as their own work.
5. I understand that the University of the Witwatersrand may take disciplinary action against me if there is a belief that this is not my own unaided work or that I failed to acknowledge the source of the ideas or words in my writing.

Signature:



Date: 12 April 2021

Appendix B: Quantitative Demographics**Demographics****Are you a South African Citizen? *** (Inclusion Criteria)*Mark only one oval.*☐ Yes☐ No**Gender ****Mark only one oval.*☐ Female☐ Male☐ Non-binary☐ Other:

Age **Mark only one oval.*☐ 18 – 24 (Generation Z)☐ 25 – 40 (Generation Y)☐ 41 – 56 (Generation X)☐ 57 – 75 (Baby Boomers)**Race ****Mark only one oval.*☐ Black African☐ Coloured☐ Indian

Socio-Economic Status (household income per month) **Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Less than R1500 per month
- ☐ Between R1501- R3500
- ☐ Between R3501- R7500
- ☐ Between R7500- R16500
- ☐ Between R16501- R33500
- ☐ Between R33501- R57500
- ☐ More than R 57501

Do you have household access to clean water, electricity and internet connection? **Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Level of Education **Mark only one oval.*

- ☐ No Education
- ☐ Completed Primary School
- ☐ Completed some grades in High School
- ☐ Completed Matric (Grade 12)
- ☐ Higher (Tertiary) Education

Appendix C: The Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ)

Read each statement (try and remember how it was during your years of growing up) and select a number from 1 to 5 - (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree) that best describes how that statement applies to you and the people/person* that raised you.

* if this is not your mother or father then think about the statement with the people/person who did take care of you

1 = Strongly disagree

2 = Disagree

3 = Neither agree nor Disagree

4 = Agree

5 = Strongly Agree

There are no right or wrong answers, so don't spend a lot of time on any one item.

1. While I was growing up my parent(s)* felt that in a well-run home I should have my way in the family as often as they did. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

2. Even if I didn't agree with them, my parent(s)* felt that it was for my own good if I was forced to obey what they thought was right. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

3. As I was growing up, whenever my parent(s)* told me to do something, they expected me to do it immediately without asking any questions. *

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

- 4. As I was growing up, once family rules had been set out, my parent(s)* talked to me about the reasons behind the rules. ***

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

- 5. My parent(s)* always encouraged verbal give-and-take whenever I felt that family rules weren't fair. ***

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

- 6. My parent(s)* always felt that what I needed was to be free to make up my own mind and to do what I wanted to do, even if that did not agree with what they might want. ***

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

- 7. As I was growing up my parent(s)* did not allow me to question any decision they had made. ***

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

- 8. As I was growing up my parent(s)* controlled my activities and decisions through reasoning and discipline. ***

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

- 9. My parent(s)* always felt that more force should be used by parents in order to get their children to behave the way they are supposed to. ***

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

10. As I was growing up my parent(s)* did not feel that I needed to obey rules and regulations of behaviour simply because someone in authority had put them in place. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

11. As I was growing up, I knew what my parent(s)* expected of me in my family, but I also felt free to discuss those expectations with them when I felt that they were unfair. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

12. My parent(s)* felt that wise parents should teach their children early just who is boss in the family. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

13. As I was growing up, my parent(s)* didn't often give me expectations and guidelines for my behaviour. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

14. Most of the time as I was growing up my parent(s)* did what I wanted when making family decisions. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

15. As I was growing up, my parent(s)* consistently gave us direction and guidance in logical and objective ways. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

16. As I was growing up my parent(s)* would get very upset if I tried to disagree with them. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

17. My parent(s)* felt that most problems in society would be solved if parents would not restrict their children's activities, decisions, and desires as they are growing up. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

18. As I was growing up my parent(s)* let me know what behaviour they expected of me, and if I didn't meet those expectations, they punished me. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

19. As I was growing up my parent(s)* allowed me to decide most things for myself without a lot of direction from them. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
--	---	---	---	---	---	--

Strongly Disagree ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

20. As I was growing up my parent(s)* took my opinions into consideration when making family decisions, but they would not decide for something simply because I wanted it. *

Mark only one oval.

Strongly Disagree ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 Strongly Agree

21. My parent(s)* did not view themselves as responsible for directing and guiding my behaviour as I was growing up. *

Mark only one oval.

Strongly Disagree ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 Strongly Agree

22. My parent(s)* had clear standards of behaviour for me as I was growing up, but they were willing to adjust those standards to the needs of each child in the family. *

Mark only one oval.

Strongly Disagree ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 Strongly Agree

23. My parent(s)* gave me direction for my behaviour and activities as I was growing up and they expected me to follow their direction, but they were always willing to listen to my concerns and to discuss that direction with me. *

Mark only one oval.

Strongly Disagree ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 Strongly Agree

24. As I was growing up my parent(s)* allowed me to form my own point of view on family matters and they usually allowed me to decide for myself what I was going to do. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

25. My parent(s)* always felt that most problems in society would be solved if we could get parents to strictly and forcibly deal with their children when they don't do what they are supposed to as they are growing up. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

26. As I was growing up my parent(s)* often told me exactly what they wanted me to do and how they expected me to do it. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

27. As I was growing up my parent(s)* gave me clear direction for my behaviours and activities, but they were also understanding when I disagreed with them. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

28. As I was growing up my parent(s)* did not direct my behaviours, activities, and desires. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

29. As I was growing up, I knew what my parent(s)* expected of me in the family and they insisted that I obey those expectations simply out of respect for their authority. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

30. As I was growing up, if my parent(s)* made a decision in the family that hurt me, they were willing to discuss that decision with me and to say if they had made a mistake. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly Agree

Appendix D: Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale (DERS)

Please indicate how often the following statements apply to you by writing the appropriate number from the scale below on the line beside each item.

1-----2-----3-----4-----5

1= Almost never (0-10%)

2= Sometimes (11-35%)

3= About half the time (36-65%)

4= Most of the time (66-90%)

5= Almost always (91-100%)

- _____ 1) I am clear about my feelings.
- _____ 2) I pay attention to how I feel.
- _____ 3) I experience my emotions as overwhelming and out of control.
- _____ 4) I have no idea how I am feeling.
- _____ 5) I have difficulty making sense out of my feelings.
- _____ 6) I am attentive to my feelings.
- _____ 7) I know exactly how I am feeling.
- _____ 8) I care about what I am feeling.
- _____ 9) I am confused about how I feel.
- _____ 10) When I'm upset, I acknowledge my emotions.
- _____ 11) When I'm upset, I become angry with myself for feeling that way.
- _____ 12) When I'm upset, I become embarrassed for feeling that way.
- _____ 13) When I'm upset, I have difficulty getting work done.
- _____ 14) When I'm upset, I become out of control.
- _____ 15) When I'm upset, I believe that I will remain that way for a long time.
- _____ 16) When I'm upset, I believe that I will end up feeling very depressed.
- _____ 17) When I'm upset, I believe that my feelings are valid and important.
- _____ 18) When I'm upset, I have difficulty focusing on other things.
- _____ 19) When I'm upset, I feel out of control.
- _____ 20) When I'm upset, I can still get things done.
- _____ 21) When I'm upset, I feel ashamed at myself for feeling that way.
- _____ 22) When I'm upset, I know that I can find a way to eventually feel better.
- _____ 23) When I'm upset, I feel like I am weak.

- _____ 24) When I'm upset, I feel like I can remain in control of my behaviours.
- _____ 25) When I'm upset, I feel guilty for feeling that way.
- _____ 26) When I'm upset, I have difficulty concentrating.
- _____ 27) When I'm upset, I have difficulty controlling my behaviours.
- _____ 28) When I'm upset, I believe there is nothing I can do to make myself feel better.
- _____ 29) When I'm upset, I become irritated at myself for feeling that way.
- _____ 30) When I'm upset, I start to feel very bad about myself.
- _____ 31) When I'm upset, I believe that wallowing in it is all I can do.
- _____ 32) When I'm upset, I lose control over my behaviour.
- _____ 33) When I'm upset, I have difficulty thinking about anything else.
- _____ 34) When I'm upset, I take time to figure out what I'm really feeling.
- _____ 35) When I'm upset, it takes me a long time to feel better.
- _____ 36) When I'm upset, my emotions feel overwhelming.

Appendix E: Qualitative Semi-Structured Interview Schedule

Bio-Ecological Framework

1. What were the conditions like in your environment growing up?

Impact of Extended Family

2. Were there any other figures in your life that raised you, aside from your parents? (Who were they and what role did they play?).

Parenting Styles and Generations

3. How would you describe the type of discipline you and your siblings received growing up?
4. How do you think future generations will parent their children?
5. Would you say gender norms played a role in how you were parented?
6. As a parent how is/would your approach to parenting be different when compared to your parents and what have they taught you about parenting?

Emotion Regulation

7. How would your parents/ guardians respond to your emotions as a child and teenager?
(*was it addressed or ignored*).
8. How often did you feel misunderstood growing up?
(*How often did you feel an emotion of not being good enough?*)
9. Do you feel like birth order (of your sibling and family) had an impact on how you would regulate your emotions growing up? (e.g., if you are the oldest sibling, you were taught to be 'strong' for the others).
10. How would people in your environment react to others when they would express uncomfortable emotions?
11. What support structures helped you deal with your emotions in life?
12. How important do you deem addressing one's emotions to be?
13. If you feeling upset, what helps you to feel better?
14. When you are angry, how do you get yourself to calm down?

15. Have you experienced any signs of anxiety, depression or low self-esteem currently or while growing up? (As a result of your environment?).
16. Have you, or do you present with any signs of aggression, violence, conduct or attention problems?

Reflections

17. What made you the happiest while growing up?
18. If you could change anything about the way you grew up what would it be?
19. What are 3 positive characteristics that are apparent in you as a result of your upbringing?
20. What are 3 negative characteristics that are apparent in you as a result of your upbringing?
21. If your younger self were in front of you right now, what advice would you give them?

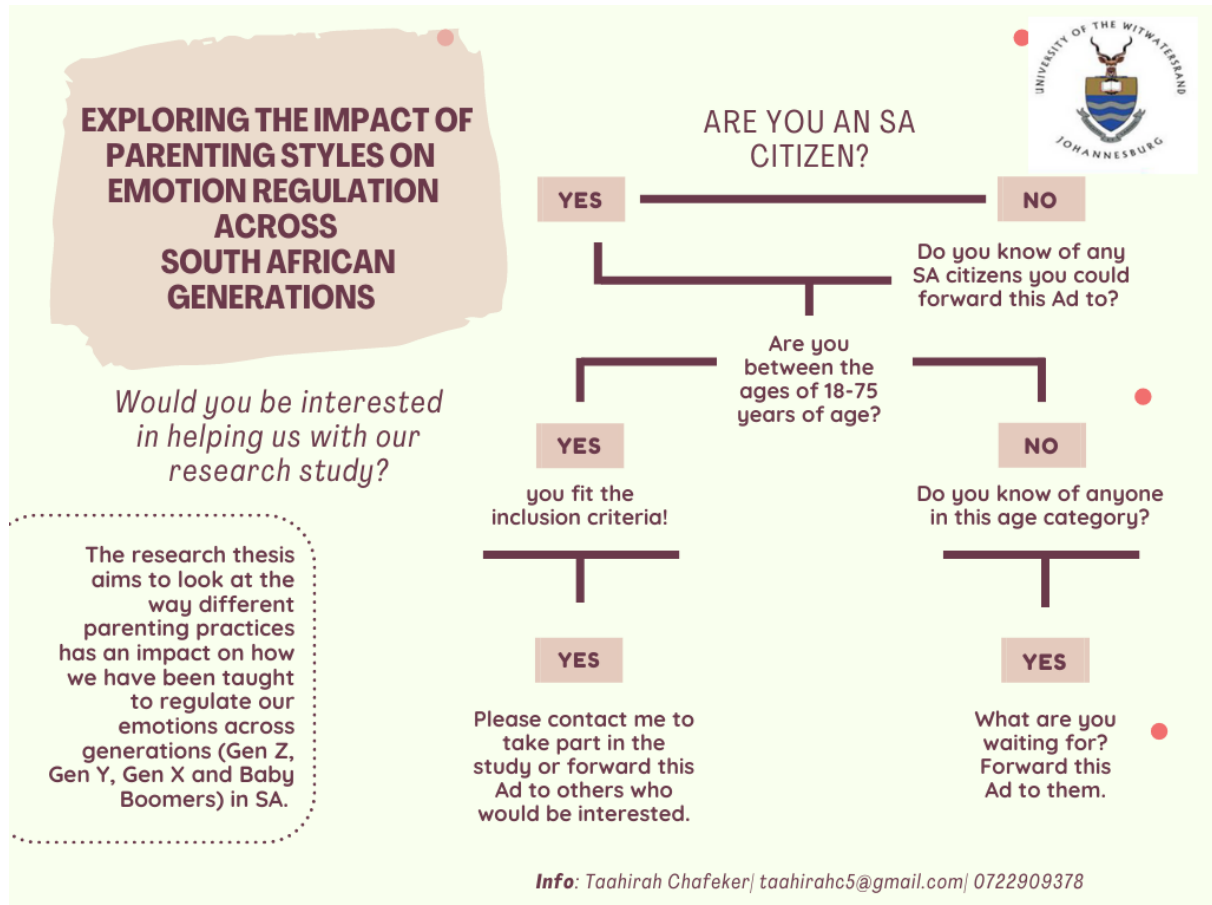
Debriefing

How are you feeling on a scale of 1-10 (10 being happy and 1 being sad)?

Was there any question in particular that affected you or one that you found hard to answer?

How did answering these questions make you feel?

Appendix F: Recruitment Advertisement



Appendix G: Information Sheet



To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Taahirah Chafeker and I am currently completing my Master's Degree in Educational Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. As partial completion of my Master's degree, I need to complete a research project.

My study is focused on exploring our diverse South African context by investigating the impact of parenting styles on emotion regulation across generations. The research will be completed with the aid of my supervisor, Mrs. Anwynne Kern. The overall aim of this research project is to measure the ways in which different parenting styles have influenced emotion regulation across four generations (Baby Boomers, Gen X, Gen Y, Gen Z) in the context of South Africa.

In aid of the completion of this research project, I would like to invite you to participate in this research project that consists of a 15–20-minute questionnaire followed by a 45 minute to an hour semi-structured interview. If you consent, I would like to digitally record the interview as a means to increase the reliability of what has been said to ensure that no words get lost. This interview process will take place online or face to face. Relevant Covid-19 protocols will be taken into consideration for the safety of yourself and the interviewer. Your temperature will be taken in the commencement of our study and we will adhere to social distancing necessities, wearing a mask and sanitising protocols. In the case of online interviews, if there is a struggle with data costs from your side, then a face-to-face interview shall be arranged instead.

It is important to note that your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to participate in this research, you may withdraw participation at any time. There will be no consequences if you decline, or if you withdraw at any time. The study will not include any financial costs from you and you will not receive any stipends from your participation in the research.

To help protect your identity and maintain the confidentiality of your contribution, questionnaires, interview audios and transcribed interviews will be kept on a password protected computer. Be assured that your confidentiality will be prioritized and I will make use of pseudonyms (false names) to protect the anonymity of your identity when reporting on the findings.

If any discomfort or distress is experienced throughout this study we will discontinue or resume the process by taking your wellbeing into consideration. A debriefing session will be held after the interview to address any emotional discomfort or questions. Should you need some additional support or counselling services as an after effect of this study, a contact for the Emthonjeni Centre at the University of the Witwatersrand is listed at the bottom of this sheet. Additionally, you could contact Toni-Ann Schneider (listed below), who is a registered Counsellor with the HPCSA for support that will be free of charge.

For any additional queries, interest in the study or concerns, feel free to make contact with me by referring to the details below. If any of these queries or concerns are related to ethics, you are welcome to contact the University of the Witwatersrand's Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical) in the additional contact list below. Once my research paper is finalised, it will be accessible online through the University's online library. If you are interested in the study, a summary of the findings will be emailed to you in infographic form. Findings may also be presented in journal articles and at conferences. With your consent, data collected may be used by future researchers in future studies. The data collected may contribute to our existing knowledge and inform future interventions with regards to parenting in the South African context.

Yours sincerely,
Taahirah Chafeker

Contact Details

Researcher**Taahirah Chafeker****Email:** 2457139@students.wits.ac.za

Supervisor**Mrs. Anwynne Kern****Email:** Anwynne.Kern@wits.ac.za

Additional Contact Details:

- **Emthonjeni Centre**

1 Jan Smuts Avenue, Braamfontein, Johannesburg**Number: 011 717-4513**

- **Human Research Ethics Committee
(Non-Medical)**

Number: 011 717-1408**Email:** hrec-medical.researchoffice@wits.ac.za

- **Registered Counsellor
(for emotional support)**

Email: sregisteredcounsellor.toni@gmail.com

Appendix H: Consent Form



SCHOOL OF HUMAN AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
PSYCHOLOGY

Title of Research: Exploring the Impact of Parenting Styles on Emotion Regulation
Across South African Generations

Researcher: *Taahirah Chafeker*; Supervisor: *Anwynne Kern*

I,, voluntarily agree to participate in this research project. The research has been explained to me and I am aware of what my consent to participate will entail. By consenting to this research, I am agreeing for my interview to be audio recorded.

I understand and am aware that:

*Check Yes or No,
where applicable*

• If I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without any consequences of any kind.	☐ Yes ☐ No
• The aim and purpose of the study was explained to me and I have had an opportunity to ask any questions regarding my concerns around my participation.	☐ Yes ☐ No
• My participation involves a 15–20-minute quantitative questionnaire which will be followed by a 45–60-minute semi structured interview that will be audio recorded.	☐ Yes ☐ No
• I may withhold sharing any information that creates feelings of discomfort.	☐ Yes ☐ No
• My information shared will be confidential and the use of a pseudonym (e.g., client X) will protect my identity.	☐ Yes ☐ No
• I understand that disguised extracts from my interview could possibly be quoted in the research report with the use of a pseudonym.	☐ Yes ☐ No
• The research prioritises that no harm be done to the participant, however if the participant is at risk to themselves or others around them, then upon communication with participants they will be reported and referred to relevant professionals and authorities.	☐ Yes ☐ No
• Questionnaires, audio recordings and transcripts will only be shared between researcher and supervisor and stored on password protected devices.	☐ Yes ☐ No
• I am free to contact the researcher for any further concerns or information.	☐ Yes ☐ No
• The findings of this study will be elaborated on in the form of a dissertation in partial completion of the Master in Educational Psychology Degree, as well as journal articles and conference proceedings.	☐ Yes ☐ No

-
- I agree for my interview to be audio recorded

☐ Yes

☐ No

Signature of participant: _____

Date: _____

Signature of researcher: _____

Date: _____

Appendix I: Clearance Certificate



SCHOOL OF HUMAN AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ETHICS COMMITTEE
CONSTITUTED UNDER THE UNIVERSITY HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE:

PROTOCOL NUMBER: MEDPSYC/21/02

PROJECT TITLE:

Exploring the Impact of Parenting Styles on Emotion Regulation
 Across South African Generations

INVESTIGATOR

Chafeker Taahirah (2457139)

SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT OF INVESTIGATOR

SHCD/Psychology

DATE CONSIDERED

17 May 2021

DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE

Approved unconditionally

RISK LEVEL

Low Risk

EXPIRY DATE

31 December 2023

ISSUE DATE OF CERTIFICATE

11 June 2021

CHAIRPERSON **Z. AMOD**

(Prof. Zaytoon Amod)

cc: Mrs. Anwynne Kern (Supervisor)

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR

To be completed in duplicate and ONE COPY returned to the Chairperson of the School/Department ethics committee.

I fully understand the conditions under which I am authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee.

T. Chafeker
 Signature

Date

23 / 06 / 2021

Appendix J: Tabulated Reflections Across Generations

All participants were asked questions around reflective ability that involved finding what advice they would give their younger self's. The table below highlights the generational differences in advice, by reflecting themes such as self-worth, emotional regulation, resilience, and faith.

Table 11

Summary Table Identifying Advice to Younger Self across Generations

Generation	Participant	Advice to Younger Self
Gen Z	P1	It's okay to feel the way you do and to be misunderstood. There are people who will understand, love and want you around. You have a lot to give, more than you think. You are enough, and you're not alone.
	P2	Find your tribe. Invest in understanding yourself. It takes time to regulate your emotions. People aren't permanent.
	P3	Be strong, life will strow challenges at you. Stay focused on goals and your Creator, and you'll be happy.
Gen Y	P4	Be yourself. Don't change for others. Be kind, have fun, and study hard. You are more than enough.
	P5	It's okay to feel different, everyone is in the world. You allowed to feel good and bad emotions. Don't shun them. People are unpredictable. Stay calm and true to yourself. Others' reactions are not your responsibility.
	P6	Do what makes you happy. You'll never live a brave life if you don't disappoint people at some point.
Gen X	P7	Don't worry so much; everything will be okay. You are worthy, strong, and capable. You mean something to people. Have courage and be yourself.
	P8	This awkward phase will pass. You'll get better and make friends. (laughs) Don't get married.
	P9	You can do anything. Anything is possible with determination. You are capable and enough.
Baby Boomers	P10	Trust yourself, have faith, and stick to your values. Do what's right, you know the difference between right and wrong, it's intrinsic we made like that.
	P11	You can't help the world. Provide others with ammunition to help themselves, but accept your limits.
	P12	Your dreams do come true.