

## The mediating role of parent–adolescent attachment in the relationship between positive parenting practices and adolescent social adjustment: A systematic literature review

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### Abstract

Adolescent social adjustment is a critical aspect of psychosocial development influenced by parenting practices and family relationships. However, the mechanisms underlying this relationship, particularly the role of Parent–Adolescent Attachment, remain insufficiently understood. This study aims to examine the mediating role of Parent–Adolescent Attachment in the relationship between Positive Parenting Practices and adolescent social adjustment. This study employed a systematic literature review approach based on articles from Scopus, Google Scholar, and ScienceDirect, following the PRISMA framework, resulting in 28 primary studies and 21 supporting articles. The findings indicate that Positive Parenting Practices are associated with better adolescent social adjustment, both directly and indirectly through Parent–Adolescent Attachment. Secure attachment supports emotional regulation, interpersonal trust, and healthy social relationships. These findings highlight the importance of attachment as a key relational mechanism and provide implications for counseling practices that emphasize strengthening family relationships.

### Introduction

Adolescence is a critical developmental stage marked by significant emotional, social, and psychological changes that require individuals to develop adequate social adjustment in order to function adaptively within increasingly complex social environments. During this stage, adolescents face developmental demands to establish broader social relationships with peers, schools, and the wider community, making social adjustment a key indicator of their developmental functioning. However, Adolescent Social Adjustment is not solely influenced by individual characteristics but is also shaped by relational contexts within the family as the primary developmental system. Developmental literature consistently indicates that parenting practices play a crucial role in shaping patterns of social interaction, emotional regulation, and interpersonal trust that underlie adolescents' social adaptation. In this context, Positive Parenting Practices, characterized by emotional warmth, responsiveness, open communication, and parental involvement, are associated with more adaptive psychosocial development (Gimenez-Serrano et al., 2022).

Conversely, less responsive or negative parenting practices are associated with increased risks of behavioral problems and difficulties in social adjustment (Climent-Galarza et al., 2022). These findings suggest that parenting practices not only influence adolescent behavior directly but also shape the emotional dynamics between parents and adolescents that play a critical role in their social development. However, prior findings also reveal variations in the strength and direction of these relationships, indicating that the influence of parenting practices on adolescents' social adjustment may not be uniformly direct and may depend on underlying psychological mechanisms that have not been sufficiently examined.

From the perspective of attachment theory, the emotional relationship between parents and children is understood as a psychological system that provides a sense of security while serving as a foundation for individuals' social exploration. During adolescence, the quality of Parent–Adolescent Attachment plays a crucial role in shaping the internal working model that influences how individuals perceive themselves and others within interpersonal relationships. Secure attachment enables adolescents to develop interpersonal trust, emotional stability, and more adaptive emotional regulation abilities in facing developmental challenges. Several studies indicate that higher-quality attachment is associated with lower levels of psychological distress and more effective emotional regulation among adolescents (Tambelli et al., 2021). In addition, attachment explains how family factors contribute to adolescent mental health through psychological mechanisms that influence individuals' responses to social and emotional pressures (Tan et al., 2023). Adolescents who have strong attachment relationships with their parents tend to perceive their family as a stable source of emotional support when facing social changes and identity development processes. In contrast, insecure attachment is frequently associated with interpersonal difficulties and increased tendencies toward maladaptive behaviors (Flykt et al., 2021). These findings indicate that Parent–Adolescent Attachment not only reflects emotional closeness between parents and children but also functions as a key psychological mechanism linking parenting experiences with adolescents' social adjustment. Nevertheless, existing studies have predominantly examined attachment as an independent predictor, with limited attention to its integrative role in explaining how parenting practices are translated into adolescents' developmental outcomes.

Within the framework of family development, Positive Parenting Practices are understood as antecedent factors that shape the quality of attachment through consistent, responsive, and supportive emotional interactions. Parenting practices characterized by warmth, open communication, and emotional support facilitate the development of trust and a sense of security within family relationships. Research indicates that positive parenting is associated with increased psychological well-being and life satisfaction among adolescents through improved emotional relationships between parents and children (M. Li et al., 2023). Furthermore, open communication and parental support are associated with more adaptive health behaviors and better mental health conditions among adolescents (J. Yang et al., 2023). Supportive family environments provide opportunities for adolescents to develop social skills, problem-solving abilities, and constructive conflict resolution strategies. In this context, attachment develops as a result of repeated relational experiences that occur in daily family interactions. Therefore, Positive Parenting Practices should not only be understood as behavioral patterns but also as relational foundations that shape the emotional quality of relationships between parents and adolescents. However, prior research has not consistently clarified whether these relational processes operate as linear effects or as part of a more complex, mediated developmental system.

However, despite extensive research examining parenting practices and adolescent development, studies that systematically examine the mediating role of Parent–Adolescent Attachment linking Positive Parenting Practices and Adolescent Social Adjustment remain limited. Most previous studies have primarily focused on the direct effects of parenting practices on psychological well-being, mental health, or behavioral outcomes. From a

relational developmental perspective, parenting experiences do not always influence adolescents' social development directly but often operate through psychological mechanisms embedded in emotional relationships between parents and children. Therefore, examining the mediating role of Parent–Adolescent Attachment is essential to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how Positive Parenting Practices contribute to Adolescent Social Adjustment. Moreover, recent research developments indicate that the quality of family relationships has broad implications for adolescents' social and psychological development. Family conditions characterized by parenting stress or family dysfunction are associated with increased risks of behavioral problems and difficulties in social adjustment (Zhou et al., 2025). Conversely, secure attachment is associated with resilience and individuals' ability to cope with social and emotional pressures (Ban et al., 2024; Jianhua et al., 2025). These findings suggest that Parent–Adolescent Attachment functions as a central mechanism integrating various psychological processes that support adolescents' social adjustment. Despite these advances, a clear integrative framework that simultaneously positions Positive Parenting Practices, Parent–Adolescent Attachment, and Adolescent Social Adjustment within a single relational pathway remains underdeveloped in the literature.

Recent studies have further highlighted the complexity of adolescent social development by emphasizing the role of broader psychosocial and contextual factors. For instance, parenting practices that promote autonomy and emotional support have been linked to improved academic and psychosocial outcomes among adolescents (Hayek et al., 2022; Alcaide et al., 2025). In addition, relational dynamics such as teacher–student relationships and interpersonal trust have also been found to indirectly influence adolescents' social adjustment (Dong et al., 2021; Chen et al., 2022). Emerging research also suggests that attachment-based parenting interventions can effectively enhance parent–child relationships and improve adolescents' emotional well-being (Bao et al., 2025; Hasani et al., 2024). Furthermore, recent studies have emphasized the importance of accessible parenting interventions in supporting adolescents facing psychosocial risks (Green et al., 2024; Jones et al., 2025). These findings indicate that adolescent social development is influenced by a complex interaction of relational and contextual factors that extend beyond direct parenting behaviors.

Recent studies have further expanded the understanding of adolescent development by emphasizing the role of broader relational and psychosocial dynamics. Evidence suggests that attachment-related difficulties are associated with increased vulnerability to behavioral and emotional problems among adolescents (Leben Novak et al., 2023; Jørgensen et al., 2024). Moreover, parental mental health conditions and family challenges, such as chronic illness or prolonged stress, may influence adolescents' psychological adjustment through attachment-related processes (Kaasbøll et al., 2021; Kaasbøll et al., 2025). Variations in parenting practices, including both positive and negative approaches, have also been shown to contribute to differences in adolescents' behavioral outcomes and developmental trajectories (Karwatowska et al., 2025; Molleman et al., 2022).

Furthermore, family diversity and relational structures may shape how adolescents experience attachment and social adjustment (Quintigliano et al., 2022). Attachment processes are closely linked to emotional regulation capacities and self-efficacy, which play a crucial role in adolescents' social functioning (Pan et al., 2022; Lee & Lee, 2021). In addition, broader contextual and risk-related conditions, including bullying and social vulnerability, further highlight the importance of family-based relational mechanisms in supporting adolescent development (Harsono & Febriyana, 2026). Taken together, these findings reinforce the view that adolescent social adjustment should be understood within a complex relational system involving multiple psychological and environmental influences.

Based on this background, the present study aims to systematically analyze the relationship between Positive Parenting Practices, Parent–Adolescent Attachment, and Adolescent Social Adjustment through a systematic literature review approach. This approach

is employed to synthesize findings from previous studies in order to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the relational mechanisms underlying adolescent social development. Although prior studies have examined parenting practices, attachment, and adolescent development, most have tended to focus on direct relationships or treat these variables independently, resulting in a fragmented understanding of the underlying psychological processes. Moreover, previous studies have reported inconsistencies in explaining the strength and direction of the relationships among these variables, particularly regarding the role of attachment as a mediating mechanism. These inconsistencies indicate that the relational processes linking parenting practices and adolescents' social adjustment remain insufficiently understood. In response to this gap, the present study offers novelty by positioning Parent–Adolescent Attachment as a central mediating mechanism within an integrative relational framework that connects Positive Parenting Practices and Adolescent Social Adjustment. Through a systematic literature review approach, this study not only synthesizes existing evidence but also provides a more cohesive conceptual explanation of how parenting experiences are translated into adolescents' social development. Furthermore, this study contributes theoretically by proposing an integrative parenting–attachment–adjustment model, while also offering practical implications for counseling and family-based interventions that emphasize strengthening emotional relationships as a foundation for adolescents' social development.

## Methods

### Design

This study employed a Systematic Literature Review approach to identify, evaluate, and synthesize research findings relevant to the topic of the study. This approach was selected because it enables researchers to comprehensively examine previous studies related to Positive Parenting Practices, Parent–Adolescent Attachment, and Adolescent Social Adjustment. Through this approach, the study aimed to map patterns of relationships among variables and identify trends in findings reported in previous research. By applying a Systematic Literature Review, the present study not only summarized previous research findings but also integrated those findings to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between parenting practices, the quality of attachment between parents and adolescents, and adolescents' social development.

### Data Source

The literature search process was conducted through several scientific databases, including Google Scholar, Scopus, and ScienceDirect, using the keywords Positive Parenting Practices, Parent–Adolescent Attachment, and Adolescent Social Adjustment. The literature search was performed by combining these keywords using Boolean operators such as AND and OR in order to broaden and refine the search results for relevant articles. The articles included in this study were scientific publications published between 2021 and 2026 and were relevant to the variables examined in this study. In addition, the metadata collected from each article included the article title, abstract, keywords, year of publication, and source of publication to facilitate the identification and selection of relevant articles.

To ensure the rigor of the review process, this study applied specific inclusion and exclusion criteria to select relevant and high-quality articles. The inclusion criteria consisted of (1) empirical studies examining Positive Parenting Practices, Parent–Adolescent Attachment, and Adolescent Social Adjustment, (2) articles published in peer-reviewed journals, and (3) studies published between 2021 and 2026. Meanwhile, the exclusion criteria included (1) studies not written in English, (2) articles without full-text access, and (3) studies that did not directly address the relationship among the key variables. This selection process

was conducted systematically to enhance the credibility and consistency of the findings synthesized in this study.

### Article Selection Procedure

The article selection process followed the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) framework, which consists of the stages of identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion. In the identification stage, the initial search through the Scopus database produced 427 articles relevant to the research keywords. In addition, 21 additional articles from other sources were included as supporting literature to strengthen the conceptual framework of the study. Subsequently, the screening process was conducted to remove irrelevant articles, duplicate articles, and articles that did not contain abstracts or did not meet the research criteria. After the screening stage, the remaining articles were further analyzed during the eligibility stage by reviewing the full text of each article. From this process, 28 primary articles were identified as meeting the methodological criteria and relevance to the research topic and were therefore included in the systematic synthesis of this study.



Figure 1. PRISMA Flow Diagram of Article Selection

### Research Instruments

In a Systematic Literature Review, the research instruments consist of a literature search protocol that includes the selection of scientific databases, the use of research keywords, and the application of inclusion and exclusion criteria in the article selection process. The keywords used in the literature search included Positive Parenting Practices, Parent–

Adolescent Attachment, and Adolescent Social Adjustment. The use of these keywords was intended to ensure that the retrieved articles were relevant to the focus of the study concerning the relationship between Positive Parenting Practices, the quality of Parent–Adolescent Attachment, and adolescents’ social adjustment.

### Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis and narrative synthesis. Each article that met the inclusion criteria was analyzed to obtain information regarding the research objectives, research methods, research populations, variables examined, and the main findings of each study. The extracted information was then categorized into several major themes, namely Positive Parenting Practices, the quality of Parent–Adolescent Attachment, and developmental outcomes in the form of Adolescent Social Adjustment. Through this process of narrative synthesis, the study sought to identify patterns of relationships among variables and explain how the quality of Parent–Adolescent Attachment functions as a mediating mechanism in the relationship between Positive Parenting Practices and Adolescent Social Adjustment.

In addition, this study also presents the trend of research publications related to Positive Parenting Practices, attachment, and adolescents’ social adjustment from 1947 to 2026 in order to illustrate the development of the literature in this field.

#### Result from Keyword Search

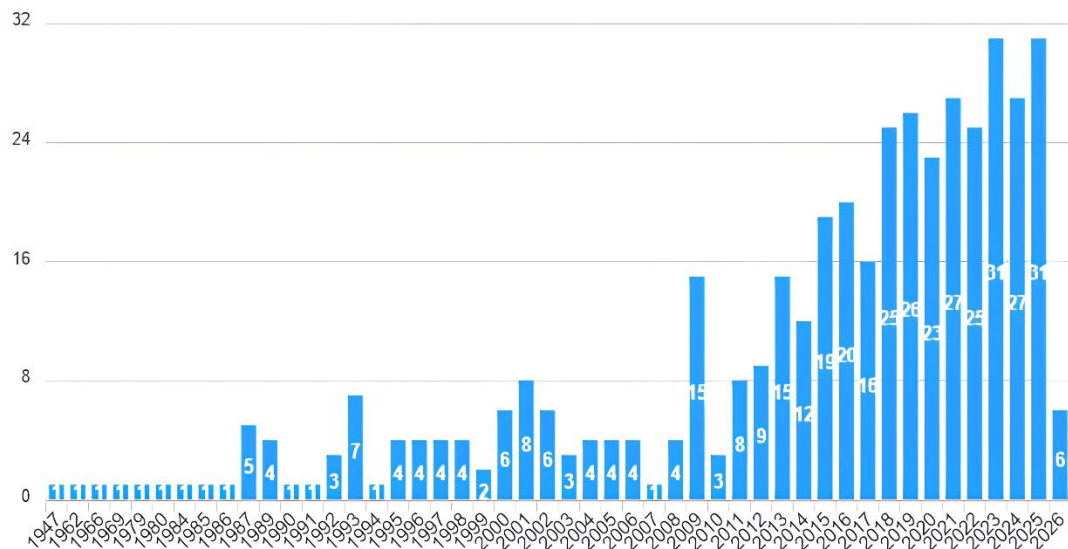


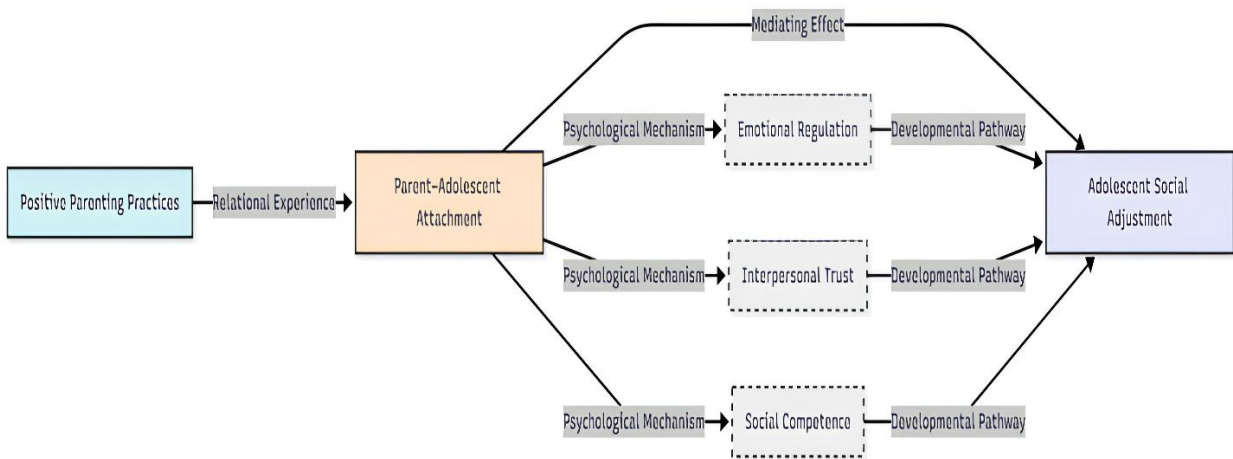
Figure 2. Research Publication Trends

### Results

The results of the literature synthesis indicate that *Positive Parenting Practices* have a consistent relationship with more adaptive adolescent social development. *Parenting practices* characterized by emotional warmth, responsiveness, open communication, and parental involvement in children's lives create a relational environment that supports the development of adolescents’ social skills. A supportive family environment allows adolescents to gain interaction experiences that help them develop the ability to understand others’ perspectives and establish healthy interpersonal relationships. Research shows that *Positive Parenting Practices* contribute to adolescents’ ability to build better social relationships with peers as well as within the school environment (Gimenez-Serrano et al., 2022). In addition, warm *parenting practices* are associated with lower levels of behavioral problems and better

*Adolescent Social Adjustment* (Climent-Galarza et al., 2022). These findings indicate that responsive parenting provides relational experiences that optimally support adolescents' social skill development.

In addition to influencing social behavior directly, Positive Parenting Practices are also associated with the development of various psychological aspects that support adolescents' social adaptation. Studies show that warm and supportive parenting practices are associated with increased psychological well-being and life satisfaction among adolescents (S. Li et al., 2023). These findings indicate that relational experiences within the family play an important role in shaping how adolescents perceive themselves and their environment. Furthermore, open communication between parents and adolescents is associated with more adaptive health behaviors and better mental health conditions among adolescents (B. Yang et al., 2022a). Supportive family environments provide opportunities for adolescents to develop social skills, problem-solving abilities, and constructive conflict resolution strategies. In this context, Positive Parenting Practices can be understood as an early source of social experience that helps adolescents develop the interpersonal competencies necessary for their social lives.



**Figure 3.** Conceptual Model of the Relationship between Positive Parenting Practices, Parent–Adolescent Attachment, and Adolescent Social Adjustment

The synthesis of the literature also indicates that the relationship between parenting practices and adolescents' social adjustment does not always occur directly but often involves psychological mechanisms that develop within emotional relationships between parents and children. In this context, Parent–Adolescent Attachment functions as a mediating mechanism that explains how parenting experiences within the family are translated into adolescents' social adaptation abilities. Secure attachment enables adolescents to develop interpersonal trust and more adaptive emotional regulation abilities when facing various social demands. Studies indicate that higher quality attachment is associated with lower levels of psychological distress and more effective emotional regulation among adolescents (Tambelli et al., 2021). Furthermore, attachment explains how family factors contribute to adolescent mental health through psychological mechanisms that influence individuals' responses to social and emotional pressures (Tan et al., 2023). Adolescents who have strong attachment relationships with their parents tend to have higher interpersonal trust and a greater ability to establish healthy social relationships.

Conversely, low or insecure Parent–Adolescent Attachment is often associated with various interpersonal difficulties and increased tendencies toward maladaptive behavior among adolescents (Flykt et al., 2021). Adolescents who lack secure emotional relationships with their parents tend to experience difficulties in forming stable social relationships with others. This indicates that the quality of emotional relationships between parents and children

plays an important role in shaping adolescents’ patterns of social interaction. In addition, studies also show that the quality of emotional relationships between parents and adolescents is associated with the quality of adolescents’ relationships with peers and their ability to manage interpersonal conflicts (Delgado et al., 2022). In this context, Parent–Adolescent Attachment does not merely represent emotional closeness between parents and adolescents but also functions as a psychological mechanism that influences how adolescents understand and navigate their social relationships.

**Table 1.** Summary of Previous Research on the Relationship between Positive Parenting Practices, Parent–Adolescent Attachment, and Adolescent Social Adjustment

No	Title	Author (Year)	Country / Setting	Method	Main Findings	Relevance
1	Parenting styles and their relations with personal and social adjustment beyond adolescence	Gimenez-Serrano et al. (2021)	Spain	Quantitative	Parenting warmth is associated with better social adjustment	Demonstrates the role of parenting in social development
2	Parental socialization, delinquency during adolescence, and adjustment	Climent-Galarza et al. (2022)	Spain	Quantitative	Warm parenting reduces delinquency and improves adjustment	Supports the importance of positive parenting
3	The predictive effect of parental adult attachment on <i>Parent–Adolescent Attachment</i>	Li et al. (2021)	China	SEM	Parenting influences attachment formation	Explains the relational mechanism
4	Positive parenting and adolescent life satisfaction	Li et al. (2023)	China	Quantitative	Positive parenting enhances well-being through attachment	Supports the mediation model
5	<i>Parent–Adolescent Attachment</i> and well-being among hearing-impaired students	Ban et al. (2023)	China	Survey	Attachment predicts <i>psychological well-being</i>	Identifies attachment as a protective factor
6	Parental attachment and peer relationships in adolescence	Delgado et al. (2022)	Spain	Quantitative	Secure parental attachment predicts peer relationship quality and social competence	Demonstrates the role of attachment in social development

No	Title	Author (Year)	Country / Setting	Method	Main Findings	Relevance
7	Adolescent attachment profiles and mental health	Flykt et al. (2021)	Finland	Quantitative	<i>Insecure attachment</i> is associated with risk behavior	Shows psychological consequences
8	Late adolescents' attachment and psychological distress during COVID-19	Tambelli et al. (2021)	Italy	Quantitative	Attachment reduces psychological distress	Explains <i>emotional regulation</i> mechanisms
9	Parent–child attachment and adolescent mental health	Tan et al. (2023)	China	Moderated mediation	Attachment predicts mental health outcomes	Supports the mediating role
10	Cultural identity and <i>Adolescent Social Adjustment</i>	Baumert et al. (2023)	Germany	Longitudinal	Identity and attachment influence social adjustment	Provides a broader contextual perspective
11	Maternal positive coparenting and adolescent peer attachment	Ji et al. (2022)	China	SEM	Parenting involvement predicts attachment	Explains relational processes
12	Attachment to parents and peers and psychopathic traits	Vagos et al. (2021)	Portugal	Longitudinal	Attachment predicts behavioral outcomes	Provides evidence for social development
13	Parent–child attachment and problematic behavior	Jianhua et al. (2025)	China	Quantitative	Attachment reduces problematic behavior	Explains the social adjustment mechanism
14	Adolescent psychological adjustment and social support	Wang et al. (2023)	International	Longitudinal	Family support predicts adjustment	Highlights environmental support factors
15	Parental attachment and adolescent health behavior	Yang et al. (2022)	China	Quantitative	Attachment improves mental health and social behavior	Strengthens the mediation pathway

Based on the synthesis of the analyzed studies, a relatively consistent pattern of relationships was identified between Positive Parenting Practices, Parent–Adolescent Attachment, and Adolescent Social Adjustment. Most studies indicate that Positive Parenting Practices are associated with the development of secure attachment relationships between parents and adolescents. Secure attachment subsequently contributes to adolescents' ability to establish healthy interpersonal relationships and reduces tendencies toward maladaptive behaviors.

In addition, numerous studies indicate that the quality of family relationships has broad implications for various aspects of adolescents' social and psychological development. Family conditions characterized by parenting stress or family dysfunction are associated with an increased risk of behavioral problems and difficulties in Adolescent Social Adjustment (Zhou et al., 2025). Conversely, secure attachment is associated with greater resilience and individuals' ability to cope with social and emotional pressures (Ban et al., 2024). Furthermore, several studies indicate that attachment is associated with various indicators of social development, including behavioral control and emotional regulation (Jianhua et al., 2025).

These findings indicate that the relationship between parenting practices, attachment, and Adolescent Social Adjustment represents an interconnected developmental system that cannot be explained independently.

## Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that the relationship between parenting practices and adolescents' social adjustment does not operate solely through direct pathways, but is mediated by psychological processes embedded within parent–adolescent emotional relationships. In this context, Parent–Adolescent Attachment emerges as a central mechanism through which parenting experiences are translated into adolescents' social adaptation. Secure attachment supports the development of interpersonal trust, emotional stability, and adaptive emotional regulation in response to social demands. Consistent with previous research, higher-quality attachment is associated with lower levels of psychological distress and more effective emotional regulation among adolescents (Tambelli et al., 2021). Furthermore, attachment provides a conceptual framework for understanding how family-related factors influence adolescents' mental health through internal psychological processes (Tan et al., 2023). Therefore, Parent–Adolescent Attachment can be conceptualized as a relational pathway that links parenting experiences with adolescents' social adjustment.

Building upon this mediating mechanism, the role of Parent–Adolescent Attachment should be understood within a broader contextual framework rather than as a uniform process. The effectiveness of this mediation may vary depending on the interaction of cultural, individual, and environmental factors. Cultural context, for instance, shapes how parenting practices are expressed and how adolescents interpret emotional relationships within the family. In collectivist contexts, parenting behaviors that emphasize relational closeness and interdependence may strengthen attachment in ways that differ from individualistic contexts that prioritize autonomy and self-direction (Baumert et al., 2024; B. Yang et al., 2022). At the individual level, adolescents' temperament, emotional sensitivity, and psychological resilience may further influence how attachment functions as a mediating mechanism. In addition, environmental factors such as peer relationships, school climate, and broader social support systems may interact with family dynamics in shaping adolescents' social adjustment (Wang et al., 2023). Taken together, these considerations suggest that the mediating process linking Positive Parenting Practices and Adolescent Social Adjustment through Parent–Adolescent Attachment is embedded within a complex ecological context that requires a more integrative interpretation.

These findings underscore that Adolescent Social Adjustment cannot be adequately understood as a direct outcome of parenting practices alone, but rather as the result of complex relational processes embedded within parent–adolescent interactions. This perspective challenges conventional direct-effect models by emphasizing that developmental outcomes are constructed through dynamic emotional exchanges within the family system. In this regard, Parent–Adolescent Attachment functions not merely as an intermediary variable, but as a central relational mechanism that shapes how parenting experiences are internalized into adolescents' social competencies (Tambelli et al., 2021 ; Tan et al., 2023). Therefore, a

relational-developmental framework offers a more comprehensive explanation of adolescent adjustment compared to linear, behavior-focused approaches.

In addition to these relational mechanisms, it is also important to consider the influence of cultural context in shaping the dynamics of parenting, attachment, and adolescent development. The relationship between Positive Parenting Practices, Parent–Adolescent Attachment, and Adolescent Social Adjustment may vary across cultural contexts, particularly between Western and Eastern societies. In Western cultures, which emphasize individual autonomy and independence, parenting practices that support self-expression and personal choice are often associated with more adaptive social outcomes. In contrast, Eastern cultures, which prioritize collectivism, family interdependence, and social harmony, tend to emphasize obedience, respect, and relational closeness within the family. These cultural differences influence how attachment is formed and how adolescents interpret parenting behaviors. For instance, behaviors perceived as controlling in Western contexts may be interpreted as caring and supportive in Eastern contexts. Consequently, the effectiveness of Positive Parenting Practices in fostering Adolescent Social Adjustment may depend on the cultural meaning attributed to parenting behaviors and family relationships (Baumert et al., 2024 ; B. Yang et al., 2022). This highlights the importance of adopting a culturally sensitive perspective when interpreting the relationship between parenting, attachment, and adolescent development. However, it should also be noted that inconsistencies across previous studies may stem from variations in cultural contexts, measurement approaches, and research designs, which potentially influence the strength and direction of these relationships.

However, it is important to critically acknowledge that prior research has largely emphasized direct-effect models, which may oversimplify the complexity of adolescent development and overlook underlying relational processes. While some studies report direct effects of parenting practices on adolescents' social outcomes (Gimenez-Serrano et al., 2022; Climent-Galarza et al., 2022), others identify the mediating role of attachment as a central explanatory mechanism (S. Li et al., 2023; Tan et al., 2023). These inconsistencies indicate that the relationships among Positive Parenting Practices, Parent–Adolescent Attachment, and Adolescent Social Adjustment cannot be adequately explained through linear or isolated approaches. Instead, these variables operate within a dynamic, interdependent relational system shaped by cultural, individual, and environmental contexts (Baumert et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2023). Accordingly, their effects should not be assumed to be universal but rather context-dependent. In this regard, the present study moves beyond a descriptive synthesis by proposing a relational, mechanism-based framework that repositions Parent–Adolescent Attachment as the central process through which parenting experiences are internalized and translated into adolescents' social outcomes. This perspective provides a more integrative understanding of adolescent development and supports context-sensitive interpretations in both research and practice. These findings suggest that treating parenting practices as direct predictors may oversimplify adolescent development, as such an approach fails to capture the underlying relational mechanisms through which developmental outcomes are constructed.

Furthermore, the findings highlight that the quality of emotional relationships between parents and adolescents has broad implications for adolescents' social and psychological development. Adolescents who experience secure attachment relationships demonstrate a greater capacity to establish healthy interpersonal relationships with peers. Positive emotional relationships within the family foster stronger interpersonal trust and greater social sensitivity during interactions. These findings are supported by evidence indicating that Parent–Adolescent Attachment is associated with the quality of adolescents' peer relationships and their ability to manage interpersonal conflicts (Delgado et al., 2022). In addition, secure attachment is linked to lower levels of risk-taking behavior and better self-control among adolescents (Flykt et al., 2021). Taken together, these findings suggest that emotional

relationships within the family function not only as sources of psychological support but also as foundational mechanisms for the development of adolescents' social competencies.

In addition, the findings of this study suggest that the relationship between parenting practices, attachment quality, and adolescents' social adjustment represents an interconnected developmental system that cannot be understood in isolation. Positive Parenting Practices function as antecedent factors that shape the emotional quality of relationships between parents and adolescents, which in turn influence various psychological aspects of adolescent development related to their social adaptation abilities. Previous studies indicate that the quality of family relationships has broad implications for adolescents' social and psychological development. Family conditions characterized by parenting stress or dysfunction are associated with increased risks of behavioral problems and difficulties in Adolescent Social Adjustment (Zhou et al., 2025). Conversely, supportive and warm family relationships are associated with higher levels of resilience and adolescents' ability to cope with social and emotional challenges (Ban et al., 2024). In addition, several studies indicate that attachment is related to various indicators of social development, including behavioral regulation and emotional regulation abilities (Jianhua et al., 2025). Therefore, the relationship between parenting practices, attachment, and Adolescent Social Adjustment can be conceptualized as a dynamic relational developmental system. Therefore, this study positions Parent–Adolescent Attachment not merely as an intermediary variable, but as a central relational process that fundamentally shapes how parenting experiences are internalized.

The findings of this study contribute to expanding the understanding of the mechanisms linking parenting practices and adolescents' social development. Most previous studies have primarily focused on the direct influence of parenting practices on various indicators of adolescent development. However, the synthesis conducted in this study demonstrates that these relationships often operate through the mediating role of emotional relationships between parents and adolescents. By positioning Parent–Adolescent Attachment as a mediating mechanism, this study provides a more comprehensive perspective on how parenting experiences influence adolescents' social development. This perspective emphasizes that the quality of emotional relationships within the family represents a key factor bridging parenting experiences with adolescents' social adjustment. In this regard, the study offers a theoretical contribution by proposing an integrative model that connects Positive Parenting Practices, Parent–Adolescent Attachment, and Adolescent Social Adjustment within a unified relational framework.

Overall, the findings of this study suggest that the relationship between parenting practices, attachment quality, and adolescents' social adjustment cannot be adequately explained through linear or isolated models. Rather than functioning as independent predictors, these variables operate within a dynamic and interdependent relational system in which Parent–Adolescent Attachment serves as a key mechanism that translates parenting experiences into adolescents' social outcomes. This perspective challenges the dominant tendency in previous studies to emphasize direct effects, which may oversimplify the complexity of adolescent development and overlook the underlying relational processes involved.

Moreover, the synthesis of existing evidence indicates that the inconsistencies observed across previous studies are not merely methodological limitations, but may reflect the inherently context-sensitive nature of the relationships among these variables. Variations in cultural context, developmental stages, and environmental conditions suggest that the effectiveness of Positive Parenting Practices is not universally uniform, but depends on how these practices are internalized through attachment processes. Therefore, this study advances the literature by proposing a more integrative and mechanism-based framework that repositions Parent–Adolescent Attachment not simply as a mediator, but as a central relational process within a broader developmental system. This reconceptualization provides a more

nuanced understanding of adolescent social adjustment and offers a stronger theoretical foundation for future research and intervention.

### **Implications**

The findings of this study have important implications for the development of counseling and guidance practices, particularly in the context of adolescent development. The results indicate that Positive Parenting Practices and the quality of Parent–Adolescent Attachment function as critical relational factors that support adolescents' social adjustment. Therefore, interventions aimed at improving adolescent social development should not focus solely on individual behavioral modification but also consider the relational dynamics within the family.

From a practical perspective, counseling approaches that emphasize strengthening family communication, enhancing parental responsiveness, and fostering emotional bonding between parents and adolescents are likely to be more effective in promoting adolescents' psychosocial well-being. In this regard, attachment-based interventions and family-centered counseling can serve as strategic approaches to improve adolescents' social competencies and emotional regulation.

Furthermore, the findings suggest that Parent–Adolescent Attachment can be utilized as an important indicator in assessing adolescents' relational difficulties within counseling settings. By incorporating the perspectives of Positive Parenting Practices and attachment into intervention programs, counselors and practitioners can design more comprehensive and contextually relevant strategies that address both individual and relational dimensions of adolescent development.

These findings are further supported by broader empirical evidence indicating that attachment processes are closely linked to emotional regulation, behavioral control, and psychosocial functioning across diverse developmental contexts (Liu et al., 2024; Leben et al., 2023; Pan et al., 2021; Musetti et al., 2024). In addition, variations in parenting contexts, including parental well-being and family structure, may influence the effectiveness of attachment in shaping adolescents' social outcomes (Kaasbøll et al., 2024; Quintigliano et al., 2022). These findings strengthen the argument that adolescent development should be understood within a dynamic relational system rather than through isolated or linear models.

### **Limitations and future directions**

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, this study employed a systematic literature review approach that depends on the availability and quality of previously published research, which may introduce potential bias related to the scope and methodological diversity of the included studies. Second, most of the analyzed studies utilized quantitative and cross-sectional designs, which limit the ability to establish causal relationships among Positive Parenting Practices, Parent–Adolescent Attachment, and Adolescent Social Adjustment. In addition, the reviewed studies were conducted across diverse cultural contexts, which may influence how parenting practices and attachment are interpreted, thereby affecting the generalizability of the findings.

Future research is recommended to employ longitudinal and cross-cultural designs to better capture the dynamic nature of the relationships among Positive Parenting Practices, Parent–Adolescent Attachment, and Adolescent Social Adjustment over time. Furthermore, future studies should incorporate broader contextual variables, such as school environments, peer relationships, and community influences, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of adolescent development. In addition, further empirical research is needed to test the proposed integrative model linking parenting practices, attachment, and social adjustment, particularly through advanced analytical approaches such as longitudinal mediation models.

## Conclusion

Based on the findings of this systematic literature review, this study demonstrates that Positive Parenting Practices play a crucial role in supporting adolescents' social development by fostering a supportive family environment characterized by emotional warmth, responsiveness, open communication, and parental involvement. These relational experiences enable adolescents to develop essential social competencies, including emotional regulation, interpersonal trust, and adaptive social behaviors, which are fundamental to achieving effective Adolescent Social Adjustment. Furthermore, the findings indicate that the relationship between parenting practices and adolescents' social adjustment does not always occur directly but operates through the mediating role of Parent–Adolescent Attachment, which functions as a key psychological mechanism in facilitating adolescents' ability to cope with social demands and navigate developmental challenges.

Conceptually, this study emphasizes that the relationship between parenting practices, attachment, and adolescents' social adjustment should be understood as an interconnected developmental system rather than as isolated factors. By positioning Parent–Adolescent Attachment as a central mediating mechanism, this study contributes to the development of an integrative parenting–attachment–adjustment model within a relational framework. Practically, these findings highlight the importance of developing counseling and guidance interventions that involve parents and focus on strengthening emotional relationships within the family. Family-based and attachment-oriented approaches may serve as effective strategies for promoting adolescents' social development and preventing maladaptive behaviors.

Thus, understanding adolescent social adjustment requires moving beyond linear models toward a relational, context-sensitive framework that captures the dynamic interplay between parenting practices and attachment processes. Ultimately, adolescent social adjustment should not be viewed as an individual outcome alone, but as a relationally constructed process shaped by ongoing interactions within the family system.

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## Author Contribution Statement

KAP contributed to the study conceptualization, literature search and selection, data analysis, and manuscript preparation. DF contributed to academic supervision, methodological validation, and manuscript review. Both authors approved the final version of the manuscript.

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