



Constructing the Meaning of Childhood Parenting Wounds on Self-Management Quality

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ABSTRACT

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This study aims to explore how unresolved parenting wounds influence self-management in adulthood, particularly in the areas of emotional regulation, interpersonal relationships, financial independence, and career development. The background of this research highlights the significant role of early parental relationships in shaping psychological and behavioral patterns that persist into adulthood, often manifesting as challenges in managing emotions, relationships, and responsibilities. A qualitative research design was employed, using a case study approach to examine the experiences of a client undergoing hypnotherapy. Findings from the study revealed three key insights childhood parenting patterns marked by frequent verbal conflicts and emotional volatility, leading to emotional insecurity, persistent emotional responses such as sadness, anger, and helplessness that suggest unresolved trauma, and career and performance instability, largely influenced by emotional burnout and a lack of assertiveness. The study concludes with recommendations for future research to explore a broader and more diverse sample, including longitudinal studies that track the long-term effects of parenting wounds. Additionally, the integration of various therapeutic approaches such as cognitive-behavioral therapy could enhance the understanding of how best to address these challenges and improve self-management in adulthood.

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INTRODUCTION

Parenting plays a pivotal role in shaping an individual's psychological and behavioral development throughout life. Early relationships with caregivers lay the foundation for an individual's emotional regulation, social skills, and coping mechanisms (Aneesh et al., 2024; Crowell, 2021; Tanzilli et al., 2021). However, when these relationships are marked by neglect, inconsistency, or emotional unavailability, individuals may develop deep-rooted psychological wounds, often referred to as "parenting wounds." These emotional scars can persist into adulthood, manifesting in difficulties with self-regulation, emotional stability, and interpersonal relationships (Morris et al., 2021; Qiu & Shum, 2022).

Parenting wounds, when unaddressed, have a profound impact on the individual's ability to adapt to life's challenges, leading to impairments in key life skills such as decision-making, resilience, and financial stability (Humphreys et al., 2022; Paley & Hajal, 2022). These challenges highlight the importance of understanding how early caregiving experiences shape the ability to manage emotions, relationships, and responsibilities as adults.

Attachment Theory, first introduced by John Bowlby (1988) (Robledo et al., 2022; Waqas et al., 2024), emphasizes the significance of early bonding between parent and child. According to Bowlby, the nature of this bond sets the groundwork for future social, emotional, and behavioral functioning. Secure attachments promote emotional regulation and healthy relationships, while insecure attachments, formed due to neglect or inconsistency, hinder an individual's capacity for self-management (Alwaely et al., 2021; Duca et al., 2023). Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory (1963) further underscores the long-lasting effects of childhood experiences on adult functioning, particularly in areas of autonomy, decision-making, and goal achievement (Astuti & Nurjannah, 2024; Choate & Tortorelli, 2022; Miller, 2023). The role of early emotional regulation in shaping long-term emotional and financial outcomes.

Previous research on parenting wounds and self-management has explored various aspects of adult functioning affected by early relational trauma. Individuals with insecure attachment styles often struggle with forming stable relationships, which hampers their interpersonal competence (Cherniak et al., 2023; Wang et al., 2023). Additionally, research on emotional regulation has demonstrated that individuals with dysfunctional early caregiving experiences often experience difficulties with mood stability, coping with stress, and forming trusting relationships (Dagan et al., 2021; Navya & Menon, 2024). Financial independence and career performance have also been shown to correlate with early emotional experiences (Gillespie & Rao, 2022), with individuals from unstable or neglectful environments often exhibiting poor impulse control and difficulty in managing responsibilities (Maj et al., 2021; Paulus et al., 2021). These studies illustrate the complex relationship between parenting wounds and adult functioning, focusing on specific dimensions such as emotional regulation, relationships, and financial well-being.

Despite the wealth of literature on parenting wounds, there remains a significant gap in understanding how these early relational experiences shape the broader construct of self-management in adulthood. Most existing studies have concentrated on specific areas, such as emotional regulation or interpersonal competence, without exploring how these factors interact and influence broader life domains, such as financial independence and career development. Furthermore, there is limited research on how individuals actively construct

meaning around their parenting wounds, particularly in the context of therapeutic interventions such as hypnotherapy. The novelty of this study lies in its qualitative approach to exploring these interconnected dimensions of self-management through a case study, providing deeper insights into the psychological narratives that shape adult functioning.

This study aims to explore the ways in which unresolved parenting wounds influence self-management in adulthood at hypnotherapy clinic in Depok, Indonesia. Specifically, it seeks to examine how these wounds manifest in four key areas of adult functioning: emotional regulation, interpersonal relationships, financial independence, and career development. By conducting a qualitative case study of a client undergoing hypnotherapy, the research intends to uncover the deeper psychological mechanisms and emotional patterns that link early relational experiences to present-day challenges. The case study approach offers an opportunity to gain a richer, more personalized understanding of how parenting wounds shape self-management in real-life contexts.

The belief that parenting wounds significantly influence adult self-management, and that understanding the construction of meaning around these wounds is crucial for promoting long-term psychological growth. By investigating the interplay between early attachment experiences and adult functioning, this research challenges the prevailing focus on isolated domains of self-management. Instead, it highlights the interconnectedness of emotional regulation, interpersonal relationships, financial stability, and career success. Moreover, by incorporating therapeutic techniques such as hypnotherapy into the study, this research aims to provide practical insights into how individuals can address and heal from their parenting wounds, ultimately enhancing their overall quality of life.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research design using a case study approach to explore the construction of meaning around childhood parenting wounds and their influence on adult self-management (Leko et al., 2021). The research was conducted at a hypnotherapy clinic in Depok, Indonesia, with a focus on clients who experience interpersonal and financial difficulties believed to be rooted in childhood emotional experiences. Participants were selected using purposive sampling. The primary informants were adult clients aged 25 and above who had undergone or were currently undergoing hypnotherapy sessions, particularly those addressing relational and financial issues. For this study, six clients were interviewed, but one participant—a 33-year-old woman—was selected for in-depth analysis due to the richness of her narrative and relevance

to the research objectives. Additionally, data triangulation was performed through interviews with hypnotherapists who had clinical experience dealing with such cases.

Data collection was conducted through in-depth, semi-structured interviews, guided by a set of open-ended questions divided into six thematic areas: (1) Present-day challenges, (2) Childhood parenting patterns, (3) Emotional wounds, (4) Emotional responses, (5) Relationship quality, and (6) Financial independence. Each interview lasted approximately 60–90 minutes and was audio-recorded with participants' consent (Mirza et al., 2023). Field notes were also taken to capture non-verbal cues and contextual information. The instrumentation consisted of an interview guide based on theoretical frameworks from Bowlby's Attachment Theory, Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory, and literature on trauma and emotional regulation. The interview questions were designed to elicit deep reflections on past experiences, emotional patterns, and current coping strategies.

Data analysis followed the thematic analysis method (Proudfoot, 2023). Transcribed interviews were coded manually, and themes were identified based on recurring patterns in participants' narratives. The coding process involved open coding, axial coding, and selective coding to ensure depth and coherence in theme development. Credibility was enhanced through member checking and peer debriefing with fellow researchers. The study adhered to ethical considerations including informed consent, confidentiality, and the right to withdraw at any stage. Participants were assured that their identities would remain anonymous and that their insights would be used solely for academic purposes.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Childhood Parenting Patterns

Regarding childhood parenting patterns, the participant recalled frequent verbal conflicts between her parents, especially episodes of jealousy and emotional volatility from her mother. These experiences left her feeling emotionally unsafe during her formative years. The initial presentation of the research findings reveals that the participant's childhood was marked by frequent verbal conflicts, particularly involving emotional volatility from her mother. These conflicts, which often arose due to jealousy and other emotional disturbances, created an emotionally unsafe environment for the participant during her formative years. As a child, she experienced a lack of stability and security, which played a significant role in shaping her emotional development. The inconsistency in her emotional experiences, coupled with the verbal altercations between her parents, left her feeling neglected and unsafe, further

complicating her ability to trust and build healthy emotional connections. This pattern of emotional volatility during childhood is often seen in cases of attachment insecurity, where the child learns to cope with emotional instability by either withdrawing or becoming overly dependent on external sources of comfort. The impact of such an environment has lasting effects on adult functioning, including emotional regulation and interpersonal relationships.

The participant's childhood parenting patterns, several key observations emerged. The participant reported frequent episodes of verbal conflict between her parents, with the mother exhibiting significant emotional volatility, often triggered by jealousy. These emotional outbursts from her mother were described as frequent and intense, contributing to an atmosphere of emotional instability at home. The participant expressed feeling emotionally unsafe and vulnerable as a result. She recounted how these conflicts made her feel isolated and unprotected, unable to rely on her parents for emotional support or stability. This documentation highlights the direct link between parenting styles marked by emotional volatility and the emotional scars carried into adulthood. These early experiences provide insight into how attachment issues may develop in response to emotionally volatile environments. The lack of secure attachment in the formative years likely led to difficulties in forming stable and trusting relationships as an adult, impacting emotional regulation and overall well-being.

Table 1. Observastion Aspect

Observation Category	Description of Findings
Parenting Conflict Frequency	Frequent verbal conflicts between parents, especially involving emotional volatility from mother.
Emotional Impact on Child	Child felt emotionally unsafe and isolated due to parental conflicts.
Parental Emotional State	Mother exhibited jealousy and emotional instability.
Long-Term Effect	Emotional scars leading to difficulties in forming stable adult relationships.

The participant's childhood parenting patterns reveals several crucial aspects of her upbringing that have contributed to the emotional difficulties she faces as an adult. The frequent verbal conflicts, particularly the mother's emotional volatility, suggest an environment where emotional safety was compromised. This aligns with Bowlby's Attachment Theory (1988), which posits that early relational experiences with caregivers create lasting templates for future relationships. The verbal conflicts and emotional volatility from the mother left the participant without the emotional stability necessary for healthy attachment development. This instability in her early years likely led to a heightened sense of emotional insecurity, which is a hallmark of attachment

disorders. The long-term effects of these early emotional experiences suggest the participant continues to carry unresolved emotional wounds, affecting her adult functioning in areas such as emotional regulation, interpersonal relationships, and career stability.

The emotional instability in Table 1, caused by frequent verbal conflicts between the participant's parents, particularly driven by the mother's emotional volatility. These unresolved childhood experiences have had lasting effects, leading to a persistent sense of emotional insecurity. This emotional turmoil during her formative years has shaped the participant's capacity to regulate her emotions and build healthy relationships. The findings suggest that her childhood environment, marked by a lack of emotional safety, played a significant role in the difficulties she faces in her adult life, including her emotional responses to stress and interpersonal conflict. It also suggests that the lack of a secure emotional foundation may contribute to deeper psychological issues such as anxiety and difficulty in asserting herself in professional settings.

Emotional Responses

When exploring her emotional responses, the participant reported feelings of sadness, anger, and helplessness both during childhood and when reflecting on those experiences in adulthood. The persistence of these emotional reactions over time suggests unresolved trauma. The participant's childhood experiences and the persistence of these emotional reactions into adulthood. The participant reported feelings of sadness, anger, and helplessness, both during her childhood and when reflecting on her early experiences as an adult. These emotions were frequently triggered by memories of her parents' verbal conflicts and her mother's emotional volatility. The participant's emotional responses, which include sadness, anger, and helplessness, point to unresolved trauma from her early relational experiences. These emotional patterns have continued into adulthood, suggesting that the psychological wounds from her childhood have not been fully addressed or healed.

The participant's emotional responses to stress were intense and often disproportionate to the situation. They noted that she frequently became overwhelmed with feelings of anger and sadness, which were often triggered by minor stressors. One therapist pointed out that the participant exhibited signs of emotional numbing, withdrawing from social interactions when she felt emotionally threatened. Another therapist observed that the participant struggled with expressing her anger in a healthy manner, often suppressing her emotions until they erupted unexpectedly. The close friend mentioned that the participant's emotional responses often led to conflicts in her personal relationships, particularly when she felt misunderstood or unsupported. These

responses further confirm the presence of unresolved emotional trauma stemming from her childhood.

The analysis of the interview results suggests that the participant's emotional responses are a direct consequence of the unresolved trauma from her childhood. The intense feelings of sadness, anger, and helplessness point to difficulties in emotional regulation, which are often a result of early attachment disruptions. The emotional numbing and difficulty in expressing anger are indicative of maladaptive coping mechanisms developed in response to childhood instability. The fact that these emotional responses continue into adulthood suggests that the participant has not fully processed the trauma from her early years, and that these unresolved emotions continue to affect her relationships and daily functioning. The findings suggest that addressing these emotional wounds is crucial for improving the participant's emotional regulation and interpersonal effectiveness.

The generalization of these findings suggests that unresolved emotional trauma from childhood can lead to persistent emotional instability in adulthood. The participant's emotional responses, including sadness, anger, and helplessness, reflect the broader pattern of emotional dysregulation observed in individuals who experienced attachment disruptions during childhood. These emotional difficulties can interfere with relationship-building and stress management, leading to significant challenges in both personal and professional settings. The interviews confirm the role of early relational experiences in shaping emotional responses and highlight the importance of addressing these unresolved wounds to foster better emotional regulation and interpersonal functioning.

The data from Research Finding 2 reveals that the participant's emotional responses, including anger, sadness, and helplessness, are deeply rooted in her childhood experiences. These emotional reactions, which have persisted into adulthood, suggest that the trauma from her early years has not been fully processed or healed. The participant's struggles with emotional regulation, particularly in response to minor stressors, reflect the long-lasting impact of childhood relational difficulties on adult emotional functioning. These findings suggest that the unresolved emotional wounds from her childhood continue to affect her overall well-being, making it difficult for her to maintain stable relationships and effectively manage stress.

Career and Performance Stability

Career and performance stability were indirectly affected by emotional burnout and lack of assertiveness. While not explicitly addressed in the interview, her described emotional exhaustion, role overload as a mother, and

unresolved relational tensions suggest vulnerability to decreased motivation and career stagnation. The participant's childhood emotional experiences on her career and performance stability. The participant's emotional burnout and lack of assertiveness were indirectly linked to her career challenges. Although career performance was not directly discussed in the interview, the participant's description of emotional exhaustion, role overload as a mother, and unresolved relational tensions point to the impact of these emotional difficulties on her professional life. The inability to manage emotional stress and assert herself in professional settings has contributed to her vulnerability to career stagnation and burnout.

The hypnotherapy sessions suggest that the participant's emotional burnout and lack of assertiveness were affecting her ability to function effectively in the workplace. During discussions about her career, the participant displayed signs of frustration and disillusionment with her job. She mentioned feeling overwhelmed by her responsibilities at home, which often left her with little energy or motivation to pursue her professional goals. The participant expressed difficulty in asserting her needs and boundaries in the workplace, which further contributed to feelings of burnout and career stagnation. These observations suggest that unresolved emotional issues from her childhood are manifesting in her career, impacting both her professional satisfaction and performance.

Table 2. Emotional Issues Category

Category	Description
Career Challenges	Emotional burnout, role overload as a mother, difficulty in asserting herself.
Emotional Impact	Frustration, disillusionment with job, lack of motivation.
Assertiveness Issues	Difficulty in asserting boundaries and needs in the workplace.
Long-Term Impact	Vulnerability to career stagnation and burnout.

Table 2 made during the hypnotherapy sessions suggest that the participant's emotional difficulties, particularly related to emotional burnout and assertiveness, are significantly impacting her career stability. The emotional exhaustion from her role as a mother, coupled with unresolved relational tensions, has led to burnout and a lack of motivation. These emotional struggles, which have deep roots in her childhood experiences, are manifesting in her professional life, contributing to a sense of career stagnation and dissatisfaction. The difficulty in asserting herself in the workplace reflects the broader emotional challenges the participant faces in managing stress, boundaries, and professional relationships.

Emotional burnout, role overload, and difficulty in asserting herself are direct manifestations of the emotional challenges stemming from her early

childhood experiences. The participant's frustration with her job and her inability to manage her professional responsibilities effectively suggest that these emotional wounds are limiting her potential for career growth and satisfaction. This underscores the importance of addressing early emotional issues to improve professional performance and overall career stability.

DISCUSSION

The impact of attachment styles on adult emotional regulation and relationship patterns. Insecure attachments formed during childhood, particularly in emotionally volatile environments, can lead to difficulties in emotional regulation and interpersonal competence (Adamopoulos & Syrou, 2022; Gillespie & Rao, 2022; Li et al., 2023). The participant's experiences reflect these patterns of emotional insecurity, which align with attachment theory's emphasis on the importance of early emotional experiences in shaping adult behavior. Psychosocial development theory emphasizes that unresolved childhood trauma can affect the ability to form stable relationships and make autonomous decisions (Downey & Crummy, 2022; Rowell & Neal-Barnett, 2022), which are key components of self-management in adulthood.

Early emotional instability can hinder an individual's ability to regulate emotions effectively, which then triggers mood instability and overreactivity. Dysfunctional attachment patterns from childhood can make it difficult for individuals to trust others and form healthy intimate relationships in adulthood (Gori et al., 2023; Paley & Hajal, 2022; Sagone et al., 2023). An unstable environment in childhood often interferes with impulse control, making it difficult for individuals to delay gratification and make responsible decisions. Early parenting experiences will shape a person's ability to manage emotions and relationships, which then impacts overall mental health and social functioning. Adults with insecure attachments often experience difficulties in emotion regulation and relationship stability, as reflected in the experiences of participants who felt emotionally insecure.

Persistence of emotional difficulties in adulthood due to unresolved childhood trauma, early life emotional instability may impair later emotional regulation. Early life attachment disorders lead to difficulties in managing emotions and forming secure relationships in adulthood (Faiz et al., 2023; Li et al., 2023; Navya & Menon, 2024). The findings underscore the importance of addressing early life emotional wounds to promote better emotional regulation and relationship stability in adulthood.

Individuals who experience emotional dysregulation in childhood often struggle with mood instability and difficulty coping with stress in adulthood.

The long-term effects of attachment disruptions on emotional regulation and relationship formation. Individuals with insecure attachment styles often struggle with emotional regulation, leading to difficulties in forming stable relationships (Gillespie & Rao, 2022; Paulus et al., 2021; Purwanto & Wafa, 2023; Zaini & Fahmi, 2023). The role of childhood emotional experiences in shaping adult attachment patterns and emotional responses.

The impact of emotional burnout on professional functioning, noting that individuals who struggle with emotional regulation often experience career stagnation and dissatisfaction. Early trauma can lead to difficulties in impulse control and decision-making, which affect professional performance (Jacobson et al., 2021). The role of early emotional experiences in shaping autonomy and competence in adulthood, including in professional settings. Insecure attachment styles often lead to difficulty in asserting oneself in both personal and professional relationships. The impact of early relational trauma on career performance and satisfaction, particularly in individuals with insecure attachment styles.

The research findings suggest that unresolved parenting wounds, rooted in childhood emotional instability, have profound implications for adult self-management. These emotional scars hinder emotional regulation, interpersonal relationships, financial independence, and career development. The findings underscore the importance of addressing these wounds through therapeutic interventions, such as hypnotherapy, to promote better emotional regulation, assertiveness, and career stability. Understanding the long-term impact of early emotional experiences on adult functioning can guide mental health professionals in providing more effective interventions for individuals facing challenges related to unresolved childhood trauma.

CONCLUSION

The profound impact of unresolved parenting wounds on adult self-management, particularly in emotional regulation, interpersonal relationships, financial independence, and career development. Childhood emotional instability, marked by frequent parental conflicts and emotional volatility, creates long-lasting psychological scars that impair an individual's ability to regulate emotions, form healthy relationships, and assert themselves in professional settings. However, the study is limited by its reliance on a single case study, which may not fully represent the broader population of individuals with similar experiences. The lack of diversity in participants and the absence of longitudinal data further restrict the generalizability of the findings. Future research should

explore a larger and more diverse sample, utilizing longitudinal approaches to track the long-term effects of parenting wounds over time.

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