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Parental Validation-Seeking Behavior and Trust in Romantic Relationships Among Young Adults

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ABSTRACT

Seeking parental approval is a key factor shaping trust in young adults' romantic relationships. Individuals raised in environments where emotional expression was restricted and approval was conditional often develop limited perceptions of closeness, security, and trust, which negatively affect their adult romantic bonds. This study examined the relationship between parental validation seeking behavior and trust in romantic relationships, and determined whether the former could predict the latter. Using a descriptive predictive correlational design, data were gathered from 437 young adults selected through purposive sampling. Participants responded to adapted 7 point Likert format versions of the Parental Conditional Regard Scale and the Trust Scale. Data were analyzed using the Shapiro-Wilk test, Spearman's rho correlation, and linear regression. Results showed parental validation seeking behavior was moderately high ($M=4.76$), while romantic trust was at a moderate level ($M=3.64$). A significant negative correlation was found between the two variables ($\rho = -0.327, p < .001$). Regression analysis revealed that emotional conditional regard and parental influence were significant predictors of romantic trust, whereas emotional suppression for approval was not. These findings highlight how early parent-child interactions shape trust in romantic relationships and underscore the importance of supportive, unconditional parenting in fostering healthy romantic connections.

INTRODUCTION

Validation-seeking in parents usually has a root in childhood. It affects individual self-perception and the perception of other people, which could impact the ability to create a trusting relationship. Previous research has indicated that what is experienced in the family as a child can affect what is desired in a romantic relationship in adult life (Chen *et al.*, 2020). This proposes a fundamental principle of development, whereby early experiences can shape relationships for an extended period of time.

Trust emerges as an important element in romantic relations, particularly in young individuals, since attachment style contributes substantially towards forming romantic relations (Jaiswal & Kundu, 2025; Kemer *et al.*, 2022). When trust is absent, it can lead to conflict, discontent, and instability, hence why early events like searching for parental validation ought to be considered. People depending on extreme validation from their parents may be hindered in developing a secure attachment, leading to concerns and a lack of confidence that make it challenging to form proper relationship patterns. Individuals in this situation may lack trust, which in turn could lead to issues of infidelity, attachment, and anxiety, serving as a major drawback in forming intimate relations (Das & Jain, 2024).

While some studies exist, such as Zhou (2025), on how childhood family influences relationship happiness, the literature is still scant on how the search for parental approval influences trust in romantic relationships. Most of the psychological processes that occur when one struggles with seeking parental approval in relation to trust, security, and one's own relationships remain

unexplored.

Thus, the present research intends to address those individuals in critical need of validation on a parental level and those experiencing difficulty with developing a sense of secure and trustful attachment with their partners. It hopes to shed some light on trust-related issues based on the pursuit of parental validation.

According to a study by Esguerra *et al.* (2025), those who have stable attachment tend to have better romantic relationships. These kids developed connections built on trust because they had pleasant memories of their early encounters with their parents. On the other hand, those who were more apprehensive struggled with negative ideas and actions that hurt their partners as well as themselves, demonstrating how children's development of trust is impacted by severe, balanced, and liberal parenting methods. For instance, the actions of the parents can cause the children to feel scared, unsure and unwanted (Shanoora *et al.*, 2023). For example, children who witness parental infidelity may struggle with insecurity and negative potential in future relationships (Amparo *et al.*, 2023). While, others would seek fulfillment from romantic partners due to deprivation of love and support from their parents (Jaminson & Lo, 2020).

The way a child is raised determines how adults form relationship patterns in the future (Zhou *et al.*, 2024; River *et al.*, 2022; Bowlby, 1969). In line with this, the study of Morin (2023) and Shanoora and Saud, (2024) suggest that parental styles can influence the overall child development: the authoritarian, which is viewed as the strict parental method causing forced child obedience (Kim *et al.*, 2021); authoritative, parents are considered

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strict but take child opinion in account (Hadiwijaya *et al.*, 2020); permissive, a forgiving but does not appreciate authority resulting to health problems or positive behavior (Garcia *et al.*, 2020; Di Pentima *et al.*, 2023; Fan, 2023); and uninvolved parenting, which expect their children to learn by themselves.

In global studies specifically in Malaysia, when a child has secure attachment with parents, the child will more likely to develop a positive romantic relationship (Yahya, 2021). For instance, international study shows that maternal relationships influence the romantic attachment behavior in young Russians, particularly on how they deal with avoidance and anxiety (Sabelnikova *et al.*, 2020). While in India, cultural values, blended families, and marriage traditions mainly influence how romantic relationships develop (Kelkar & Natu, 2025). Asian cultural values are most likely to increase the likelihood of having authoritarian parental style, specifically in Hong Kong (Yim, 2022).

However, in the Philippines, Filipino society, solidarity, loyalty, and close family relationships are highly prized. As a result, a lot of young adults look to their parents for approval before starting or continuing romantic relationships (Gozum, 2020). Some young adults in NCR exhibit fearful-avoidant attachment styles minimizing their difficulties in order not to bother or embarrass their families (Bobadilla *et al.*, 2024) which has an impact on young adults' relationship management and even their performance in work environments (Das, 2023).

According to the study of Ruelan *et al.* (2024) from Cor Jesu College, they examined the community of B'laan and found out that couples tend to have troubles when it comes to mutual understanding and emotional intimacy. Compared to the Western research of Humphrey & Bliuc (2021), that often emphasizes people with independence by choosing their own partners. The local study in Mindanao of Magonlig & Arnado (2025), on the other hand, shows a stronger influence from family expectations and traditional values. This makes parental attitudes and family expectations more important relationship choices. Because of this, seeking validation might play a different role in Mindanao than in other regions. These differences show why more localized studies should be needed.

Although there has been an increase in findings connecting family-of-origin experiences with adult romantic associations, there appears to be a lack of studies that investigate, in particular, parental validation-seeking behavior. Those studies on family of origin, for example, in Zhou (2025), reveal findings that relationship satisfaction with adults, as well as trust between individuals, is influenced by associations with one's family of origin. In another study with a similar theme, Yilmaz *et al.* (2023) posited that trust between couples is significantly predicted by factors such as styles of attachment, parental divorce, and previous relationship breakups. However, these studies appear shallow in their research as they center around the context of broad topics such as parenting styles, attachment style, or past

experiences, contrasted with, for example, in this research, the psychological process of seeking validation, which is relevant to themes of adult attachment.

Nonetheless, to bridge this gap, this study seeks to concentrate on parental validation-seeking behavior as a separate predictor of trust in romantic relations. Through this particular correlation, this study aims to directly correspond with the objectives of this research, which are to explore levels of parental validation-seeking behaviors in relation to emotional conditional regard, emotional suppression for approval, and parental influence on romantic trust, to identify levels of trust in romantic relations in relation to honesty and transparency, dependability and reliability, and support and certainty, and to establish how these concepts are related. This study also seeks to find how parental validation-seeking behavior can be a significant predictor of an individual's trust in romantic relations. Through this correlation, a new perspective can be gained as it seeks to specifically identify that validation-seeking, as a certain psychological construct, can be a factor in shaping an individual's trust in romantic relations, highlighting theoretical and practical concepts related to attachment theories and other related interpersonal theories.

This research assumes that the respondents answered the questionnaire truthfully and that the questions were understood as intended. Moreover, this research also assumes that one's trust and emotional bond in romantic relationships are driven by parental validation-seeking behavior and conditional regard experienced during childhood. It also depended on Attachment Theory and Social Learning Theory to justify how the trend of parental validation-seeking affects trust formation in a romantic relationship. These assumptions were necessary, not only for the justification of the results but also for the interpretation of the data and the demonstration of how early parental experiences shape trust and attachment in the romantic relationships of young adults.

The study is anchored by Attachment Theory as proposed by John Bowlby (1969) and Social Learning Theory as proposed by Albert Bandura (1977). Both theories apply to validating how parental validation influences a trusting relationship. Attachment Theory implies that how one is parented as a child affects how they develop their emotions, trust, and intimacy, even if how one is parented is a dysfunctional validation where a person becomes insecure, fearful that their partners might abandon them, and find it hard to believe their partners. On the other hand, Social Learning Theory points out that how one enhances their behaviors is through observing others, particularly those that they look up to, such as a parent, meaning if a person seeks validation as a child, when they grow up, they may still need that as a factor that affects their ability to develop a trusting relationship.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Participants

The research involved participants aged 18–25 years old,

currently in a relationship and willingly decided to join the survey. The researchers employ purposive sampling, selecting participants who were suitable for the study and had relevant characteristics, which helped ensure that the data collected was relevant and reliable. In total, 437 individuals took part and were free to proceed or withdraw at any moment, with all responses remaining confidential. Most of the respondents were female ($n = 266$, 60.9%), then followed by males ($n = 130$, 29.7%), and LGBTQ+ individuals ($n = 41$, 9.4%). This shows that the sample were mostly females but did encompass

the gender identities. In terms of age, the majority were 18–20 years old ($n = 324$, 74.1%). The next large group was aged 21–23 ($n = 91$, 20.8%), with a smaller number aged 24–25 ($n = 17$, 3.9%). Overall, the sample mainly consisted of late teens and young adults. Most respondents were students ($n = 401$, 91.8%), showing that the sample was largely made up of those currently in school or college. A small number were employed ($n = 18$, 4.1%) or self-employed ($n = 18$, 4.1%), indicating some representation from working individuals as well.

Table 1: Characteristics of Respondents

PROFILE	f	%
GENDER		
Male	130	60.9%
Female	266	29.7%
LGBTQ+	41	9.4%
AGE		
18-20	326	74.6%
21-23	92	95.7%
24-25	19	4.3%
OCCUPATION		
Student	401	91.8%
Employed	18	4.1%
Self-employed	18	4.1%

Research Instruments

The instruments that were used to collect data for this research were questionnaires adapted from the Parental Condition Regard Scale by Roth *et al.* (2009) and Trust Scale from Rempel and Holmes (1986). Parental Conditional Regard Scale refers to a 15-item questionnaire having 3 major indicators: Emotional Conditional Regard, Emotional Suppression for Approval and Parental Influence on Romantic Trust. This instrument has been extensively implemented in the research works of adolescents and young adults where it has been found valid. Various studies reported the values of Cronbach's alpha between 0.81 and 0.84, thus indicating good internal consistency. With this research, the researchers had the instrument evaluated by experts and carried out a pilot test to confirm its reliability with Philippines context, particularly among young adults at UM Digos College. The pilot testing attained a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.81, which points to a high level of reliability; hence, the instrument is deemed suitable for assessing parental validation-seeking behavior.

All the statements of the Parental Conditional Regard Scale were rated by respondents, on a 7-point Likert Scale, which goes from 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3

= slightly disagree, 4 = neutral, 5 = slightly agree, 6 = agree, 7 = strongly agree. Likert scales give a possibility to quantify subjective characteristics of respondents which can be later converted to numerical data (Koo & Yang, 2025). The numerical data can then be processed and interpreted to show different levels of parental conditional regard among respondents.

The Trust Scale was utilized to depict trust in romantic relationships. The tool comprises 17 items divided into three components: Honesty and Transparency (1 item), Dependability and Reliability (5 items), and Support and Uncertainty (11 items). Like the first scale, all items were rated on a 7-point Likert scale from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 7 = Strongly Agree. The original scale has been used extensively in relationship-related studies and has been shown to have a reliability coefficient of around 0.81. The pilot test for this study resulted in a Cronbach's alpha of 0.80, thus the adapted instrument can be considered reliable in measuring trust among Filipino young adults. Furthermore, these two measures were chosen because of their proven reliability, validity, and appropriateness for gaining insight into parental conditional regard and trust in romantic relationships of young adults.

The tables below show the interpretations of the mean

Table 2: Parental Validation-Seeking Behavior Mean Interpretation

Mean Range	Interpretation	Qualitative Description
6.21 - 7.00	Very High	The level of parental validation-seeking behavior among participants is very high.
5.34 - 6.20	High	The level of parental validation-seeking behavior among participants is high.

4.47 - 5.33	Moderately High	The level of parental validation-seeking behavior among participants is moderately high.
3.60 - 4.46	Moderate	The level of parental validation-seeking behavior among participants is moderate.
2.73 - 3.59	Moderately Low	The level of parental validation-seeking behavior among participants is moderately low.
1.87 - 2.72	High	The level of parental validation-seeking behavior among participants is high.
1.00 - 1.86	Very High	The level of parental validation-seeking behavior among participants is very high.

Table 3: Trust in Romantic Relationships Mean Interpretation

M e a n Range	Interpretation	Qualitative Description
6.21 - 7.00	Very Low	The level of parental validation-seeking behavior among participants is very low.
5.34 - 6.20	Low	The level of parental validation-seeking behavior among participants is low.
4.47 - 5.33	Moderately Low	The level of parental validation-seeking behavior among participants is moderately low.
3.60 - 4.46	Moderate	The level of parental validation-seeking behavior among participants is moderate.
2.73 - 3.59	Moderately High	The level of parental validation-seeking behavior among participants is moderately high.
1.87 - 2.72	High	The level of parental validation-seeking behavior among participants is high.
1.00 - 1.86	Very High	The level of parental validation-seeking behavior among participants is very high.

scores of the Parental Validation-Seeking Behavior and Trust in Romantic Relationships among young adults. Mean scores were interpreted using predetermined mean ranges.

Design and Procedure

This research utilized a descriptive-predictive correlational design to examine, describe, and explore the extent of parental validation-seeking and romantic relationship trust among adults, in addition to understanding how these variables are related. Moreover, this research design also assists in uncovering present associations between variables, as well as offering an indication of how parental validation-seeking has a predictive role in influencing trust outcomes.

To facilitate proper usage of the instrument, the researchers requested permission to adapt it from the developers of Parental Conditional Regard Scale and the Trust Scale. Therefore, the researchers emailed the developers of Parental Conditional Regard Scale and Trust Scale for permission to use their instrument. They received a positive response from the developers of Parental Conditional Regard Scale and Trust Scale, and their instrument turned out to be reliable as the alpha value for Parental Conditional Regard Scale was 0.81, while that of Trust Scale was 0.80 during the reliability test.

Concerning data gathering, there were online questionnaires using Google Forms, as well as further distribution of questionnaires manually. To gather data, purposive sampling was utilized. This involved identifying respondents when permission to carry out a study was accorded through formal letters from both the adviser and the Dean of their school. Moreover, respondents were given an informed consent form before responding to questionnaires to comply with ethical considerations. In statistical analysis, the Shapiro–Wilk test was first conducted to assess data normality and indicated that the data were not normally distributed, with a normality test value of less than 0.05. Therefore, Spearman’s rho correlation coefficient test was used. This was followed by a linear regression analysis using JAMOWI version 2.7.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The Level of Parental Validation-Seeking Behavior

Table 4 summarizes the findings used to assess the Level of Parental Validation-Seeking among young adults who are committed to romantic relationships in three different categories: Emotional Conditional Regard (ECR), Emotional Suppression for Approval (ESA), and Parental influences on Romantic Relationship (PRT).

On a per-indicator analysis, parental influence on romantic relationships showed the highest level ($M = 5.00$, $SD = 0.391$), classified as “moderately high.” This

Table 4: Levels of Parental Validation-Seeking Behavior among Participants

Indicator	M	SD
Emotional Conditional Regard	4.21	0.54
Emotional Suppression for Approval	4.96	0.46
Parental Influence on Romantic Trust	5.00	0.39

finding is supported by White *et al.* (2024), who explained that parental attachment and interaction greatly influence the development of future romantic relationships. Liefbroer (2025) also noted that role modeling, although often considered less important, becomes influential through careful observation of parents in forming trust and successful relationships.

This was closely followed by emotional suppression for approval (ESA), with a mean of ($M = 4.96$, $SD = 0.456$), interpreted as “moderately high.” Previous studies have shown that emotional suppression for parental approval may contribute to emotional invalidation (Payne, 2025) and that habitual suppression of emotional expression is associated with lower relationship satisfaction among both romantic and married couples (Mukherji, 2025).

On the other hand, the lowest score was observed in emotional conditional regard (ECR), with a mean of ($M = 4.21$, $SD = 0.540$), interpreted as “moderate.” This is supported by Steffgen *et al.* (2025), who found that young adults seek approval and acceptance from parents through compliance. Similar results were highlighted by Assor *et al.* in the year 2003 and by Haines in 2022, pointing out

that approval from parents is usually earned by fulfilling their expectations. Additionally, empirical studies have established that conditional regard impacts the display of negated emotions as a person feels obligated to satisfy the parent’s expectations in exchange for parental love, especially when faced with a lack of support on account of not satisfying the parent’s expectations (Bouffard *et al.*, 2023).

The Level of Trust in Romantic Relationships

Table 5 summarizes the survey results measuring the level of trust in romantic relationships across three criteria: Honesty and Transparency (HT), Dependability and Reliability (DR), and Support and Certainty (SC). Among the three indicators, Dependability and Reliability (DR) obtained the highest mean ($M=3.88$, $SD=0.122$), indicating a moderate level of trust. This was followed by Honesty and Transparency (HT) ($M=3.76$), also indicating a moderate level. Support and Certainty (SC) is the lowest ($M=3.48$, $SD=0.396$), which similarly indicates a moderate level of trust.

Table 5: Levels of Trust in Romantic Relationships among Participants

Indicator	M	SD
Honesty and Transparency	3.76	NaN
Dependability and Reliability	3.88	0.12
Support and Certainty	3.48	0.40

Dependability and reliability received the highest mean value ($M=3.88$; $SD=0.122$). This suggests that both in-depth studies as well as previous studies have indicated a positive correlation between relationship quality and dependability, in which dependability was identified as a major component of trust. It has been ascertained that it is an important dimension to accurately calculate trust in an intimate relationship, along with predictability and faith (Claresta & Djaja, 2025; Lango, 2025).

On the other hand, Honesty and Transparency scored the second-highest mean score ($M=3.76$), indicating that honesty promotes trust in a relationship where the involved parties are free to express their thoughts and feelings. As per the study, honest and modest individuals are less likely to indulge in acts such as dishonesty, the display of honesty in the form of modesty increases the functioning of a relationship and results in decent behavioral outcomes (Le *et al.*, 2025; Reinhardt & Reinhard, 2023; Brunell *et al.*, 2022).

Support and Certainty had the lowest average score ($M=3.48$, $SD=0.396$), reflecting either lack of confidence

in relationship stability or lack of felt emotional support. Although views of partner dependability are less variable, the more anxiously, avoidantly attached partner understands and rates partner support as less positively themselves (Feenstra *et al.*, 2019; Rice *et al.*, 2020). Support/certainty scores can also be impacted by recent conflict, life stress, or sudden disparities in responsiveness (Brandão *et al.*, 2019; Rice *et al.*, 2020).

In conclusion, the main trust theories imply that trust in a romantic relationship is based on evidence obtained from experience, founded upon the dependability and reliability of the partner, which means consistency regarding similar behavior. Honesty enhances reliability, but support and certainty are mere emotional experiences stemming from the more tangible behavior serving as the foundation of the trust (Holmes & Rempel, 1989).

Correlation between Parental Validation-Seeking Behavior and Trust in Romantic Relationships

Table 6 shows the relationship between parental validation-seeking behavior and trust in romantic

Table 6: Summary of Spearman's rho Correlation Between Parental Validation- Seeking Behavior and Trust in Romantic Relationships

	Trust in Romantic Relationships
Parental Validation-Seeking Behavior	-0.327*** ($<.001$)
*** $p < .001$	

relationships among young adults. The results show that there is significant difference between the two variables, and this difference describes a negative correlation ($p = <.001$, $r = -0.327$) meaning that young adults who seek less parental validation tend to have higher trust in their romantic partners.

This finding is supported by Yilmaz *et al.* (2023), who reported that trust is negatively correlated with anxiety and avoidance. Similarly, Liao (2025) found that emotional alienation from parents is negatively associated with interpersonal trust, which in turn affects romantic avoidance, highlighting the influence of parent-child relationships on trust in romantic contexts. Furthermore, another related study revealed that negative parental

behaviors are significantly associated with lower romantic relationship quality and greater conflict in dating relationships (Tosun and Yazici, 2021). Overall, these studies prove that if young adults are less dependent on parental approval, they are more likely to develop trust in their romantic partners.

Regression Analysis for Variables

Table 7 depicts the regression analysis for the variables that predict trust in romantic relationships among young adults. The table indicates that two predictors are significant in explaining the levels of trust of young adults.

Table 7: Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Trust in Romantic Relationships

Predictor	β	SE	t	p
Intercept	5.1745	0.2000	25.87	$<.001$
Emotional Conditional Regard	-0.0989	0.0296	-3.34	$<.001$
Emotional Suppression for Approval	-0.0443	0.0388	-1.14	0.254
Parental Influence on Romantic Trust	-0.1851	0.0339	-5.46	$<.001$
R^2	0.147			
F	25.0			

Results of the linear regression analysis with the correlation coefficients showed that the equation was significant at $p < .05$. The overall linear model was significant, $F = 25.0$, $p > .001$, which showed that the three variables combined significantly impact trust within a romantic relationship. $R (.384)$ denotes a medium relationship strength. Additionally, $R^2 (.147)$ showed that the predictions can account for 14.7% of trust in a romantic relationship. It can be noted that even though this model accounts for a significant portion of the trust relationship, the other 85.3% is yet to be explored and can be influenced by personal experiences in relation to trust. On the other hand, from the coefficients, Emotional Conditional Regard is statistically significant with $B = -0.0989$ and $p < .001$, while the Parental Influence on Romantic Trust is also statistically significant with $B = -0.1851$ and $p < .001$. These two variables are very influential in the levels of trust in romantic associations. On the contrary, the Emotional Suppression for Approval is not statistically significant, meaning that the said variable does not significantly affect the levels of trust. The unstandardized regression coefficient (B), indicates the changes in the outcome for a one-unit change in predictor, indicating that the increased level of predictors

will result in a lower level of trust in romantic relationships. While the Standard Error (SE) measures the variability of the (B) estimate, it represents that the small (SE) is equivalent to a high significance of the t-value, which tests the null hypothesis and the relationship between variables. And the p-value indicates a significant level, showing the probability of observing the result based on the magnitude of (B) and the present value indicated by the (SE) via t-value.

Per indicator analysis indicates that parental rejection tendencies (Parental Influence on Romantic Trust) which are higher, decrease trust in romantic relationships. Young adults who perceive parental care as something that is only given when they follow certain conditions may grow up to be more insecure and less trusting in close relationships. This argument is supported by Liao (2025), as it argues that lack of emotional involvement with one's parents results in the development of low general trust, which has an effect on trust in intimate relationships. This argument is also supported by Sangma and Unnikrishnan (2025) in that early parental relationships influence one's subsequent relationships, including trust, comfort, and one's ability to establish stable romantic relationships. Moreover, the increase in emotional-control-related

parental behavior (Emotional Conditional Regard) also results in a decrease in trust. It is possible that young adults, feeling the need to change their emotions or behavior just to get emotional approval from their parents, take this habit with them into their romantic relationships. They may become more worried, insecure, and fear losing acceptance. This is consistent with the results of Yilmaz *et al.* (2023), who found that among the various sources of low trust in romantic partners, insecurities in attachment styles, particularly those arising from early parent-child relationships, have shown the strongest correlation.

On the other hand, the results showed no significant impact of Emotional Suppression for Approval on trust. This finding suggests that the specified type of parental behavior does not play an important role in the development of trust in a romantic relationship. Some young adults could possibly develop their independence or get the necessary emotional support from friends; thus, the impact of this parental factor would be diminished.

To sum up, the findings in Table 7 suggest that the behavior of parents seeking validation through their children is the factor that is most related to trust in romantic relationships when parental conditional regard and emotional approval patterns are prominent. These findings imply the continuance of the influence of early experiences with parents on how safe, open, and trusting young adults feel when forming romantic relationships.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to examine the link between parental validation-seeking behavior and trust in romantic relationships in young adults. This study involved 437 respondents, of which the majority were students (91.8%), females (60.9%) and aged between 18 and 20 years (74.1%). The findings showed that overall, young adults had high scores on the three aspects of validation-seeking (emotional conditional regard, emotional suppression for approval, and parental influence on romantic trust). Meanwhile, romantic trust was at a moderate level with moderate scores in honesty and transparency, dependability and reliability, and support and certainty. In general, participants were highly seeking parental approval and their trust in romantic partners was moderate to average.

Data was determined not to be normally distributed and thus non-parametric testing was used. There was a strong negative association, the more individuals looked to parents for validation, the less trust they had in romantic relationships. Further analysis using regression showed that emotional conditional regard and parental influence had significant predictive effects on lower romantic trust, with emotional suppression for approval not predicting romantic trust in a significant way. The findings provide further evidence that parental validation seeking is a psychological construct that is relevant and directly influences the development of trust in romantic relationships.

The results point to the long-lasting effect of early parent-

child relationship patterns on adult relational functioning. A conditional or strong influence can make it difficult for people to develop fully secure, trustworthy relationships later in life. This highlights the importance of supportive and unconditional parenting in developing healthy relationship skills. The study provides clear insights, but is based on self-reported data, and the sample was primarily composed of students, who may not be representative of other groups or settings. Future studies could involve a wider age range, other cultural and socioeconomic groups and other factors to increase knowledge of the impact of family experiences on intimate relationships throughout adulthood. On a practical level, the findings could inform counseling, family education and relationship advice services, with a focus on decreasing conditional regard and fostering autonomy in young adults to strengthen more trusting, romantic relationships.

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