

Adolescents' Intuitive Appraisal, Attributions and Emotions for their Relationships with their Parents

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Abstract

This study aimed to examine (a) adolescents' attributions and emotions for their subjectively perceived good and bad relationships with their parents, (b) the association of the intuitive and attributional appraisals of the adolescent-parent relationship with the subsequent emotions, and (c) the role of the perceived importance of the good adolescent-parent relationship in the generation of attributions and emotions, and in the impact of attributions on emotions. The sample comprised 670 adolescents, both genders, aged 14-17 years old, representing various parental socioeconomic levels. The results showed that: (a) It was extremely important for the adolescents to have good relationships with their parents, (b) the perceived good adolescent-parent relationships were attributed to internal, stable and personal controllable factors, along with parent- and self-parent interactive- related factors, while the estimated as bad relationships were attributed to external, stable, personal uncontrollable and external controllable factors (parents' negative properties), (c) the adolescents experienced intense positive and negative emotions (mainly, general / outcome- dependent) for the perceived good and bad relationships with their parents, respectively, (d) both intuitive and attributional appraisals of the relationship were associated with the emotions, particularly in the perceived bad adolescent-parent relationship, and (e) the relative strength of the association of the attributional dimensions with the emotions varied between the perceived good and bad adolescent-parent relationship and across the various emotions.

Keywords: Adolescent-Parent Relationship, Attributions, Emotions, Intuitive Appraisal.

1. Introduction

Previous research from a number of vantage points with children and adolescents indicates that

parent have important influences in various aspects of their children's life, such as education and overall psychological adjustment (e.g., Aunola, Stattin, & Nurmi, 2000; Collins, Maccoby, Steinberg, Hetherington, & Bornstein, 2000; Dornbusch, Ritter, Leiderman, Roberts, & Fraleigh, 1987; Duckworth, Peterson, Matthews, & Kelly, 2007; Lee, Daniels, & Kissinger, 2006; Hutchinson & Yates, 2008; Leung & Kwan, 1998). The investigation with adolescents, in particular, has recently focused on specifying the kinds of influence parents do have on different adolescent outcomes (Glasgow, Dornbusch, Troyer, Steinberg, & Ritter, 1997). For example, parenting styles and practices have been a major topic in the parent socialization literature (see Grolnick, Gurland, DeCoursey, & Jacob, 2002; Soenens, Duriez, Vansteenkiste, & Goossens, 2007; Wigfield, Byrnes, & Eccles, 2006; Zentner & Renaud, 2007). Parental psychological control has also been a significant target of research with parents (Barber, 2002; Shek & Lee, 2005). These concepts reflect and are associated with the parent-child relationships (Fincham, 2003; Steinberg & Silk, 2002).

Although the relations between parents and children change as children enter adolescence, parents' influence remains significant in many sections of adolescent' life, both in and out of school (Bleeker & Jacobs, 2004; Birkeland, Melkevik, Holsen, Wold, 2012; Eccles & Harrold, 1993; Fulton & Turner, 2008; Sanders & Epstein, 2004). Also the between them positive relations have beneficial outcomes to both parents their adolescent (Steinberg & Silk, 2002). This study focuses on adolescent-parent relationship.

However, the perceived parenting practices are related to the children's development (Darling & Steinberg, 1993; Dornbusch et al., 1987; Durkin, 1995; Knafo & Schwartz, 2003; Lamborn, Mounts, Steinberg, & Dornbush, 1991; Perry, Hladkyj, Reinhard, Clifton, & Chipperfield, 2005; Steinberg, Elmen, & Mounts, 1989). More over, as Steinberg and colleagues (e.g., Gray & Steinberg, 1999; Steinberg, Lamborn, Dornbusch, & Darling, 1992) suggest, when researching adolescent outcomes, the relevant measure is the child's perception of the parenting. 'Children's perception of their parents' behavior is as important an influence on their development as are parents' actual behaviors' (p. 1270). The current study examines adolescents' perceptions of their relationships with their parents.

More precisely, this investigation examines adolescents' intuitive and attributional appraisals of their relationships with their parents, since both concepts are significant contributors in the development and quality of a close relationship (Blas, 2007; Harvey, Pauwels, & Zickmund, 2005; Karney, McNulty, & Bradbury, 2003), and they have been central concepts examining close relationships (Collins, Ford, Guichard, & Allard, 2006; Fincham, 2003; Greitemeyer & Weiner, 2003; Harvey, 1987; Harvey & Omarzu, 1999; Prager, 1995; Reis & Patrick, 1996; Stephanou, 2005, in press; Weiner, 2001). Whether partners perceive their relationship as positive or negative, and which explanations or interpretations they make about the relationship influence their emotions, motivation and behaviour (Blascovich & Mandess, 2000; Fincham, 2003; Fincham, Beach, Arias, Brody, 1998; Fitness, Fletcher, & Overall, 2005; Flecher, Fitness, & Blampied, 1990; Flecher & Thomas, 2000, Stephanou, 2011, in press; Stephanou & Balkamou, 2011). For example, parental attributions are associated with parental satisfaction and behavior (e.g., Bugental & Shennum, 1984; Sacco & Murray, 1997; Slep & O'Leary, 1998). Similarly, children's attributions for parent behavior are related to their satisfaction (Bugental & Goodnow, 1998; Fincham, Beach, Arias, & Brody, 1998).

This study also investigates adolescents' emotions for their relationships with their parents because emotions are inherently and intensely experienced in the context of close relationships, and they play important role in future behaviour (Baucom, Epstein, Stanton, 2006; Berscheid & Ammazalorso, 2003; Forgas, 2002; Forgas & Smith, 2005; Parrott, 2003; Rose, 2007; Siemer, Mauss, & Gross, 2007; Smith & Kirby, 2000; Stephanou, 2007).

While the antecedents of emotions for an interpersonal relationship are extent and various, intuitive and attributional appraisal is a major source of them (Fletcher, 2002; Weiner, 2002). More specifically, the attributional appraisal perspective to emotions focuses on how specific emotions, such as sadness and anger are elicited, and on the motivational functions they serve in particular relationship (Clore & Ortony, 2010; Frijda, 1993, 2007; Smith & Kirby, 2000; Weiner, 2002, 2005). For example, if an adolescent believes that the parent's good behaviour was the significant factor for their good relationship, then she / he may experience admiration or gratitude. Anger combines distress over an undesired event with perceiving the other as responsible for it (Ortony, Clore, & Collins, 1988; Stephanou, 2011). Once emotions are experienced, they influence partners' on-going appraisals, perceptions, information processing with important consequences in relationship judgments and behaviours (see Bless, 2003; Parrott, 2003; Weiner, 2006). For example, happy partners make more optimistic attributions than unhappy (Forgas, 1994; Planalp & Fitness, 1999). Anger pushes individuals to attribute blame and malicious intentions to others (Fitness & Fletcher, 1993; Keltner, Ellsworth, & Edwards, 1993).

Accordingly, this study investigates adolescent-parent relationship from a socio-cognitive perspective. Specifically, Weiner's (1992, 2001, 2002) attributions theory was involved, which, incorporating cognitive appraisals and emotions, is helpful in understanding interpersonal relationships (see Argyle, 2001; Fincham, 2003; Fitness & Fletcher, 1993; Fitness et al., 2005; Fletcher & Clark, 2003; Hewstone & Antaki, 2001).

1.1 Attributions and Emotions for Interpersonal Relationships

People appraise their interpersonal relationships by evaluating and by attributing causes (Leary, 2000; Smith & Lazarus, 1990; Trope & Gaunt, 2005). These appraisals reflect what the relationship means to the individual and whether it is good or bad (Fincham, 2003; Fitness et al., 2005).

Regarding attributions, an intimate relationship could be attributed to infinite number of attributions but self, partner, self-partner, situation, environment and relationship itself are the most prominent causes in describing positive and negative relationships (Argyle, 2001; Erber & Gilmour, 1995; Planalp & Rivers, 1996; Stephanou, 2011, in press; Stephanou & Balkamou, 2011). Attributions are categorized into causal dimensions of locus of causality (internal / external to the person), stability (stable / unstable over time) and controllability (personal and external controllable / uncontrollable) (Weiner, 2002), which have psychological and behavioral consequences (Argyle, 2001; Berscheid & Ammazzalorso, 2003; Fletcher & Thomas, 2000; McAuley, Duncan, & Russell, 1992; Stephanou, 2007; Weiner, 2002, 2005).

However, whether a relationship is good or bad influences the attributional pattern (Fiedler, Semin, Finkenauer, & Berkel, 1995; Fincham, 2003). More precisely, the partners tend to attribute their good interpersonal relationships to themselves (internal, stable, personal controllable, and external uncontrollable), and their negative interpersonal relationships to the other person and situational factors (Fitness et al., 2005; Stephanou, 2005, 2007, 2011; Weiner, 2001, 2002; Ybarra & Stephan, 1999). Furthermore, the more negative the interpersonal relationship the more the attributions to the other person's constant negative properties (Argyle, 2001; Gilbert & Malone, 1995; Hewstone & Antaki, 2001; Stephanou, in press; Williams & Gilmore, 2008).

As above mentioned and research documented both intuitive appraisal and the attributional appraisal are major source of experienced emotions in interpersonal relationships (Clark, Fitness, & Brissette, 2003; Fletcher, 2002; Smith & Lazarus, 1990; Trope & Guant, 2005; Weiner, 2002). According to Weiner's (2002) attribution theory, in particular, there are

‘outcome- dependent’ (e.g., happiness, pleasure, sadness) emotions, that are the initial and strongest response to the valence of the relationship. For example, if it is positive, a person feels happy, whereas if it is negative, he / she feels sad. The ‘attribution – dependent’ (e.g., anger, encouragement) emotions are influenced by the causal explanation for the relationship (Oatley & Jenkins, 1998; Siemer et al., 2007; Weiner, 2002). For example a person may feel anger if believes that the partner could and should have behaved differently. In contrast, a person may experience confidence about his/ her relationship if considers the partner’s positive dispositional factors as causes for the good relationship.

While all causal dimensions are related to emotions for the partner’s behavior and the relationship, their prevalence differs across the various emotions. Locus of causality, stability and controllability mainly influences the self-esteem (pride)- expectancy (confidence)- and social (shame, anger, gratitude)- related emotions, respectively (Berndsen & Manstead, 2007; Weiner, 2001, 2005, 2006). For example, internal attributions for a good relationship are related to the emotions of confidence and pride, whereas external attributions maximize positive behaviors, such as help seeking, or negative responses, such as helplessness, avoidance and lack of persistence. In contrast, attributing a bad interpersonal relationship to internal factors maximizes incompetence, shame, guilt and resignation, whereas attributing unsuccessful events to others causes aggression and vindictiveness (see Fincham, 2003; Fitness et al., 2005; Stephanou, 2011).

Individuals, by attributing their positive interpersonal relationship to stable causes, enhance their expectations of being good their relationship in the future and get involved in the relationship. On the contrary, attributing their bad interpersonal relationship to unstable factor increases the possibilities of improvement the relationship and minimizes the feeling of hopelessness. Stability regarding the bad relationship, attributing it to stable factors reduces positive expectations, maximizes the feeling of hopelessness and contributes into learned helplessness, a sense that none effort can lead to good relationship (see Fitness et al., 2005; Peterson and Steen, 2005; Seligman, 2002; Weiner, 2001).

Guilt and anger are elicited by controllable causes, but guilt emerges from internal, whereas anger is elicited by external factors (Stephanou, 2007, 2011; Weiner, 1992). Hate resulted from appraisals of relative powerlessness and a perceived lack of control (see Fitness et al., 2005). Also, stable causes maximize the feeling of pity, given uncontrollable causes, and the feeling of anger, given controllable causes (Graham & Hoehn, 1995).

Overall, the belief that an individual (adolescent) has about the causes of his / her interpersonal relationship with his / her parent influences his / her feelings for the parent and the relationship, and expectations for the quality of the relationship in the future (Fletcher, 2002; Fletcher & Thomas, 1996; Stephanou, in press; Weiner, 2001). Then, emotions and expectancy have significant effects on his / her (adolescent’s) actual behavior toward the parent and the between them relationship (Fincham, 2003; Fletcher & Clark, 2003; Weiner, 2001).

1.2 Aim and Hypotheses of the study

This study aimed at investigating (a) adolescents’ attributions and emotions for their subjectively perceived good and bad interpersonal relationships with their parents, (b) the association of the adolescents’ intuitive and attributional appraisals for their interpersonal relationships with their parents with their emotions for the same relationships, and (c) the effect of the importance attached to good interpersonal relationship in the generation of attributions, emotions and in the impact of attributions on emotions.

The Hypotheses of this study were the following.

The adolescents will attribute the perceived interpersonal relationships with their parents to various factors but, among them, parent, self, parent-self interaction and environment will be dominant (Hypothesis 1a). The perceived good relationships will be attributed to internal, stable, personal controllable and external uncontrollable (e.g., self properties) factors, while the perceived bad relationships will be attributed to external, unstable, external controllable, and personal uncontrollable (e.g., parent-related) causes (Hypothesis 1b). Locus of causality will be the most powerful dimension in discriminating the two groups of the adolescents (Hypothesis 1c).

The adolescents will experience various emotions for the perceived quality of their relationships with their parents (Hypothesis 2a). They will also experience intense positive and negative emotions (mainly, outcome-dependent) for their perceived positive and negative relationships with their parents, respectively (Hypothesis 2b).

The intuitive appraisal and the attributional appraisal of the adolescent-parent relationship will be positively associated with the emotions for the perceived good and, mainly, bad relationship (Hypothesis 3a). Each attributional dimension will be mainly related to specific kind of emotions, as suggested in attributional theories, particularly in the perceived bad adolescent-parent relationship (Hypothesis 3b). The intuitive appraisal and the reflective appraisal of the adolescent-parent interpersonal relationship, compared the one to other, will be better associated with the outcome-dependent emotions and attribution-dependent emotions, respectively (Hypothesis 3c).

The importance of the good adolescent-parent relationship will influence the attributions and the emotions, and the impact of attributions on emotions, particularly in the negative relationship.

2. Method

2.1 Participants

The participants in this study were 670 adolescents, both genders, aged 14 - 17 years old. They came from various towns of Greece, representing various parental socioeconomic levels. The majority of the adolescents (85%) focused on mother, while the minority of them focused on father (10%) or on father-mother (5%) (see procedure below). According to the findings with respect to the participants' perceived relationship with the parents as good or bad (see measurements below), the 450 and 220 adolescents perceived that their interpersonal relationships with their parents were good and bad, respectively.

2.2 Measures

Perceptions of relationships. The adolescents' perceptions of the quality of their interpersonal relationships with their parents were estimated by responding to a seven-point four items scale (e.g., "How good is your relationship with your parent?", "How much satisfied are you with your relationship with your parent?"). Responses ranged from 1= not at all to 7= very much. The construction of the scale was based on similar research (Alsaker, Dundas, & Olweus, 1991; Birkeland et al., 2012; Stephanou, 2005, 2007, 2011, in press; Stephanou & Balkamou, 2011).

The adolescents themselves defined their relationships with their parents as good or bad by completing the relationship scale twice. More precisely, they, first, filled it for the current quality of the relationship with their parents, and, then, mentioned the lowest value in each item over which their relationship with the parent would be positive. Children whom the relationship with their parents was lower than the indicated as good formed the group of the

bad relationships, while those whose relationship was equal or higher than the indicated as good formed the group of the good relationships. Cronbach's alpha was .79.

Attributions. The adolescents' attributions for their perceived quality of their relationships with their parents were examined via the slightly modified Causal Dimension Scale II (CDSII, McAuley, Duncan, & Russell, 1992). This scale has proven a reliable and valid research instrument in examining attributions for intimate interpersonal relationships in Greek population (see Stephanou, 2005, 2007, 2011; Stephanou & Balkamou, 2011). The adolescents indicated the most important factor which, according to their opinion, influenced the quality of their relationship with their parents, how much this factor contributed to the given relationship, and classified that cause along the causal dimensions of locus of causality (internal / external causes to him/ herself), stability (stable / unstable causes over time), personal controllability (personal controllable / uncontrollable causes) and external controllability (controllable / uncontrollable causes by others). Each subscale consists of three items, ranging from the negative pole 1 = not at all stable to the positive pole 9 = totally stable. Cronbach's alphas were .82 for locus of causality, .80 for stability, .89 for personal controllability, and .74 for external controllability.

Emotions. Adolescents' emotions for their perceived quality of their relationships with their parents were assessed by mentioning the extent to which they experienced twelve emotions: happiness, pleasure, satisfaction, cheerfulness, not irritated-irritated, love, pride, encouragement, hope, confidence, gratefulness and not anger- anger. The emotions had the form of adjectives with two opposite poles, with the positive pole having the high score of 7 and the negative pole having the low score of 1 (e.g., happy 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 unhappy). The consistency of the scale was based on previous research (see Stephanou, 2007, 2011; Weiner, 1992, 2001).

Perceived importance of the good relationship. The importance attached by the adolescents to good interpersonal relationships with their parents was measure by four questions (e.g., "How important is the good relationship with your parent for you?", "How much importance does the good relationship with your parent have for you?"). Responses ranged from 1 = not at all to 7 = very much. Cronbach alpha was .94. Preliminary analysis showed that the vast majority of the participants (93%) focused on the 6th and 7th point of the scale, indicating the high importance of the good relationship with the parents for them. Consequently, this specific variable was not further analyzed.

Personal factors. The personal information scale consisted of a set of questions relevant to personal factors, such as age, grade and gender.

2.3 Procedure

All the participants were asked, first, to write down the parent, choosing the mother or the father or both (mother and father together), and, then, to fill out the scales that referred to the relationship with the chosen parent. The adolescents individually completed the scales in front of the researchers in quiet classrooms in their schools. In order to ensure that any relationship among the examined variables was not due to procedure used, the participants completed first the scale of the perceived quality of their relationship with their parents, then the emotions scale, and, finally, the scale of the attributions. To match the scales that were responded by the same adolescent, the adolescents were asked to choose a code name and use it on the questionnaires. The participants were assured of anonymity and confidentiality.

3. Results

3.1 Attributions for the Perceived Good and Bad Adolescent- Parent Relationships

The categories and the frequencies of responses to the open-ended question about the attribution of the perceived quality of the adolescent- parent interpersonal relationships are presented in Table 1. The reliability of this coding scheme was tested with the percentage of agreement between two judges, who were familiar with attribution theory. There was agreement in 92% of the categorized responses. Inspection of Table 1 reveals the variability of the adolescents' attributions in the perceived good and bad relationships with their parents. Thus, Hypothesis 1a was in the main confirmed.

The χ^2 test for the distribution of attributions within the perceived good and bad adolescent-parent relationship revealed significant effects. More precisely, the adolescents attributed their perceived good relationships with their parents mainly to parents' understanding of their needs (24.20%), love (22.20%), parents' care of them (9.30%), acceptance by parents (9.00%) and effective communication with their parents (8.30%), $\chi^2(9, N = 450) = 212.45, p < .01$. In contrast, the adolescents attributed their perceived bad relationships with their parents mainly to parents' lack of understanding of their needs (28.30%), ineffective communication with their parents (14.50%), parents' lack of care of them (13.20%), parents' bad behavior (10.45%) and lack of bi-directional respect (8.10%), $\chi^2(9, N = 220) = 108.70, p < .01$.

In addition, the frequency of each of the attributions differed between the perceived good and bad adolescent-parent relationship. More precisely, the adolescents, who estimated their relationship with their parents as good, compared to the adolescents, who perceived their relationships with their parents as bad, more often mentioned love, $\chi^2(1, N = 115) = 60.80, p < .01$, parents' care of them, $\chi^2(1, N = 71) = 2.70, p < .05$, parents' understanding of their needs, $\chi^2(1, N = 170) = 12.45, p < .01$, discussion – conversation, $\chi^2(1, N = 38) = 15.20, p < .01$, bi-directional trust, $\chi^2(1, N = 47) = 13.30, p < .01$, and acceptance by the parents, $\chi^2(1, N = 52) = 15.10, p < .01$.

Table 1 Frequency of the adolescents' attributions for their perceived good or bad relationships with their parents

Attribution elements	Good relationships		Bad relationships	
	f	%	f	%
Love	100	22.20	15	6.80
Communication	37	8.30	32	14.50
Parents' care of their adolescents	42	9.30	29	13.20
Parents understand their adolescents' needs	109	24.20	62	28.30
Discussion – Conversation	30	6.70	7	3.20
Bi-directional respect	10	2.30	18	8.10
Bi-directional trust	36	8.00	11	5.00
Parents' behavior	23	5.00	23	10.45
Adolescent acceptance by parents	40	9.00	12	5.45
Other causes (e.g., school performance, drug)	23	5.00	11	5.00

Note: The attributions are positive and negative in nature in the perceived good and bad relationship, respectively.

Similarly, the findings with respect to attributional dimensions showed significant effects. Specifically, the results from the ANOVAs with the adolescents' perceived relationship (good / bad) with their parents as independent variable and each of the attributional dimensions as the dependent variable revealed significant effect. The results from Discriminant analysis (Table 2) confirmed the univariate effects and, in addition, indicated that the locus of causality, discriminating power = .83, followed by, personal controllability, discriminating power = .86, was the most powerful factor in discriminating the two groups of the adolescents.

Furthermore, examination of the mean scores (Table 2) indicated that the adolescents made internal, personal controllable, external uncontrollable and stable attributions for their perceived good relationships with their parents. In contrast, they made external, external controllable, personal uncontrollable and stable attributions for the perceived bad relationships with their parents.

Hypotheses 1b and 1c were in the main confirmed by the above findings.

Table 2 Descriptive statistics and results from Discriminant analysis for the adolescents' attributional dimensions for their perceived good and bad relationships with their parents

Attributional dimensions	Good relationships		Bad relationships		Wilks' Lambda	Discriminating power	F
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
Locus of causality	22.65	3.80	10.00	11.85	.54	.93	493.60
Personal controllability	21.70	4.30	11.90	5.50	.59	.86	430.30
Stability	20.85	5.45	16.11	7.75	.89	.30	42.95
External controllability	13.60	7.80	18.90	7.25	.86	.35	48.70

Note: All F(1, 668)- values are significant at the .01 level of significance.

3.2 Emotions for the Perceived Good and Bad Adolescent- Parent Relationships

The results from the two repeated measures ANOVAs, one for each group of the perceived quality adolescent-parent relationship (good/ bad), in which emotions was the within-subjects factor, showed that the participants experienced various emotions and a variety of intensity of emotions for their perceived good, $F(11, 439) = 18.35, p < .01, \eta^2 = .52$, and bad, $F(11, 209) = 20.50, p < .01, \eta^2 = .61$, relationships with their parents. Inspection of the scores (Table 3) and the post hoc pairwise comparisons indicated that the children felt intense positive emotions, mainly love, pleasure, happiness, encouragement, satisfaction and hope for their perceived good relationships with their parents. On the contrary, the adolescents experienced intense negative emotions, mainly anger, non satisfaction, hate, sadness, unhappiness, ungratefulness and displeasure for their perceived bad relationships with their parents.

Discriminant analysis was conducted to determine the set of emotions that best discriminated the two groups of the perceived adolescent-parent relationship (good / bad). The results from this analysis (Table, 3) confirmed the univariate findings, and, additionally, revealed that (a) the adolescents, who perceived their relationships with their parents as good, compared to the adolescents, who perceived their relationships with their parents as bad, experienced more positive emotions, and (b) the emotion of love, discriminating power = .90, followed by the emotions of satisfaction, discriminating power = .87, pleasure, discriminating power = .78, happiness, discriminating power = .67, and hope, discriminating power = .59, was the most powerful factor in discriminating the two groups of perceived adolescent-parent relationship.

The above results mainly confirmed Hypotheses 2a and 2b.

Table 3 Descriptive statistics and findings from Discriminant analysis for adolescents' emotions for their perceived good and bad relationships with their parents

Emotions	Good relationships		Bad relationships		Wilks' Lambda	Discriminating power	F
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
Happiness	6.16	2.60	3.05	1.30	.60	.67	396.40
Satisfaction	6.05	.90	2.83	1.30	.50	.87	487.30

Pleasure	6.28	3.00	3.03	1.38	.57	.78	432.10
Pride	5.45	.85	3.67	1.50	.84	.41	112.20
Encouragement	6.06	1.00	3.52	1.60	.58	.54	230.45
Hope	6.05	1.00	3.30	1.60	.64	.59	285.60
Love	6.45	1.10	2.85	1.40	.48	.90	562.40
No anger- angry	5.50	1.20	2.83	1.30	.74	.42	116.85
Cheerfulness	5.90	1.21	3.00	1.25	.72	.49	210.45
Not irritated-irritated	5.60	3.20	3.62	1.90	.84	.41	110.20
Confidence	5.30	2.10	3.62	1.40	.87	.35	96.45
Gratefulness	5.90	1.00	3.20	1.93	.67	.44	124.00

Note: All F(1, 668)- values are significant at the .01 level of significance; The nature of the emotions is positive and negative in the perceived good and bad relationship, respectively.

3.3 Correlations of the Intuitive and Attributional Appraisals with the Emotions for the adolescent-parent relationship

The results from correlations coefficients analyses (Table 4), confirming hypothesis 3a, and partly in agreement with Hypothesis 3b and 3c, showed:

(a) The more good relationship an adolescent perceived that he/she had with his / her parent the more intense the positive emotions, mainly love, satisfaction and cheerfulness, and (b) the more negative relationship an adolescent perceived that he/she had with his / her parent, the more intense the negative emotions, mainly unhappiness, dissatisfaction, hate, displeasure and hopeless.

(c) By attributing the perceived good adolescent-parent relationship to personal controllable, stable and internal factors, the adolescents experienced intense positive emotions, (d) by attributing the perceived bad adolescent-parent relationship to external, personal uncontrollable and unstable factors, the participants experienced less intense negative emotions, particularly angry and displeasure, (e) external controllability was only associated with the emotion of sadness, (f) locus of causality, compared to the rest of the attributional dimensions, evidenced the strongest association with most of the emotions in the group of the perceived good adolescent-parent relationships, while stability, along with personal controllability, was most closely related to the majority of the emotions in the group of the perceived bad adolescent- parent relationships.

Table 4 Correlations of the adolescents' intuitive and attributional appraisals of their relationships with their parents with the subsequent emotions in association to perceived good and bad relationship

Emotions	Intuitive appraisal	Locus of causality	Personal controllability	Stability	External controllability
Perceived good relationship (N = 450)					
Happiness	.24	.40	.15	.17	--
Satisfaction	.50	.31	.35	.33	--
Pleasure	.32	.52	.26	.24	--
Pride	.30	.40	.21	.20	--
Encouragement	.45	.38	.26	.35	--
Hope	.43	.22	.28	.23	--
Love	.49	.66	.32	--	--
No anger	.43	.45	.33	.34	--
Cheerfulness	.49	.27	.28	.27	--
No irritated	.44	.26	.32	.33	--
Confidence	.42	.35	.24	.26	--
Gratefulness	.39	.37	.22	.32	--
Perceived bad relationship (N = 220)					
Unhappiness	.71	.24	.52	.42	--

Non satisfaction	.71	.32	.42	.34	--
Displeasure	.60	.60	.39	.49	--
Shame	.53	.45	.46	.25	--
Discouragement	.38	.44	.51	.71	--
Hopelessness	.58	.50	.55	.62	--
Hate	.60	.47	.62	.65	--
Anger	--	.67	.58	.54	--
Sadness	.58	.29	.44	.50	.32
Irritated	.41	.45	.38	--	--
Non confidence	.53	.47	--	.35	--
Ungratefulness	.49	.32	.47	.56	--

Notes: All r- values are significant at the .01 level of significance; -- = values, $p > .05$.

(g) The relative strength of the association of the attributional dimensions with the emotions varied between the perceived good and bad adolescent-parent relationship and across the various emotions; Specifically, in the group of the perceived good adolescent-parent relationships, locus of causality was mainly associated with the general (love, pleasure, happiness)- self (pride)- and other (no anger)- related emotions, personal controllability was mostly related to general (love, satisfaction)- and other (no irritated, no anger)- related emotions, and stability was mainly associated with satisfaction, the expectancy (encouragement)- and other (no irritated, no anger)- related emotions. In the group of the perceived bad adolescent-parent relationships, locus of causality was mainly associated with the general (displeasure, hate)-, self (shame)-, other (anger)- and expectancy (hopelessness, no confidence, discouragement)- related emotions, personal controllability was in the main associated with the general (love, happiness, satisfaction)-, expectancy (hopelessness, discouragement) and other (anger, ungratefulness)- related emotions, and stability was mainly related to expectancy (hopelessness, discouragement)-, other (anger, ungratefulness)- and general (hate, sadness)- related emotions.

(h) The intuitive appraisal and the attributional appraisal of the perceived bad adolescent-parent interpersonal relationship, compared the one to other, were more strongly associated with the outcome- dependent emotions and attribution- dependent emotions, respectively; while this pattern was not evident in the perceived good adolescent- parent interpersonal relationship, (i) attributions were more closely associated with the attribution dependent- than outcome- dependent emotions in the perceived bad adolescent-parent relationship, while the respective pattern was not clear in the perceived good adolescent-parent relationship, (j) the intuitive appraisal of the adolescent-parent relationship was more strongly related to outcome-dependent emotions than the attribution- dependent emotions, particularly in the perceived bad relationship, and (k) both appraisals of the adolescent-parent relationship were more strongly associated with the emotions for the perceived bad than good adolescent-parent relationship.

4. Discussion

The main aim of this study was to investigate (a) possible differences between the adolescents who perceive their relationships with their parents as good or bad with respect to subsequent attributions and emotions, and (b) the association of both intuitive and attributional appraisals of the adolescent-parent relationship with the emotions.

4.1 Attributions and Emotions for the Perceived Good and Bad Adolescent-Parent Relationships

The attributional pattern for the perceived quality of the adolescent-parent relationship was in the main consistent with our predictions. Specifically, the adolescents attributed their relationships with their parents to various causes, reflecting the high importance of such relationships in their life (Argyle, 2001; Birkeland et al., 2012; Fulton & Turner, 2008; Zentner

& Renaud, 2007). This argument is also supported by the attributional pattern within- and between- the perceived good and bad adolescent-parent relationship (see Harvey et al., 2005; Weiner, 2002, 2005). More accurately, the participants searched for explanations not only for their perceived negative relationships with their parents but also for their perceived good relationships with their parents, contrary to the notion that only negative events evoke attribution processing (see Fincham, 2003; Fincham & Bradbury, 1990; Weiner, 1985).

Also, by attributing the perceived good adolescent-parent relationship to personal properties, along with parent- related factors, self-parent interactive related factors, internal, stable and personal controllable factors, enhanced themselves, multiplied the chances of good relationship in the future, and, simultaneously, the adolescents indicated the crucial role of the parent in forming a good relationship (Barber, 2002; Collins et al., 2000; Fiedler et al., 1995; Fincham, 2003; Rusbult, Arriaga, & Agnew, 2003). On the other had, the adolescents, by attributing their perceived bad relationships with their parents to parents' lack of care and understanding their adolescents' needs, along with external, personal uncontrollable and external controllable factors, protected themselves (see Collins et al., 2006; Stephanou, 2005, 2007, 2011; Weiner, 2001). However, considering the parent as responsible for the perceived bad relationship does not facilitate future positive relationship, as researches have documented (Karney et al., 2003; Mason, 2001; Trope & Gaunt, 2005; Weiner, 1995). Furthermore, attributing the perceived bad adolescent- parent relationship to stable causes minimizes the chances for future satisfactory relationship (Fletcher, 2002; Fincham et al., 1998; Glasgow et al., 1997; Planalp & Rivers, 1996; Stephanou & Balkamou, 2011).

The adolescents mentioned love and communication as causes for their relationships with their parents. This finding supports the interactive nature of the relationship, and the necessity of effective communicative skills (Carr, 2005; Rose, 2007).

Similarly, since it was very important for the adolescents to have good relationships with their parents, they reacted affectively in high intense (Fletcher, 2002; Forgas, 2002; Forgas & Smith, 2005; Frijda, 1993, 2009). Also, probably, the adolescents might have expected and desired satisfactory relationships with their parents, and confirmation of them produced intense positive emotions (see Bless, 2003; Trope & Gaunt, 2005), while the no confirmation of them resulted into intense negative emotions (Berscheid & Ammazalorso, 2003; Carver & Scheier, 2000; Forgas, 2002; Frijda, 2007, 2009; Parrott, 2003). This argument is related to the Berscheid (1983) emotion-in-relationships model suggesting the greater the interruption when one partner does something unexpected, or fails to do something expected, the higher the intensity of the experienced emotions.

Interestingly, the adolescents considered the development of their relationship with their parents because, based on Seligman's (2002) view of classification of emotions, they experienced emotions which are related to the past (e.g., pride/ shame), the present (e.g., pleasure / displeasure) and the future (e.g., confidence / non confidence, hope / hopelessness).

It should be mentioned, however, that the experience of some certain negative emotions does not facilitate future good relationship. For example, previous researches suggest that anger is positively related to attribute malicious intentions to other, anxiety enhances the belief that threatening events are about to occur, and sadness shapes malicious attributions for conflicts in close relationships (Fitness et al., 2005; Forgas, 1994, 1995; Planalp & Fitness, 1999).

The finding, revealing that the general / outcome- dependent emotions (love, happiness, pleasure), followed by the expectancy- related emotions (hope, encouragement), was the most powerful factor in discriminating the two groups of the adolescents, is in line with Weiner's (2002, 2005) theory.

In sum, the correlations among emotions, attributions and intuitive appraisal of the adolescent-parent relationship were in the main as expected. Specifically, the adolescents experienced discrete emotions by cognitively appraised their relationships with their parents along ‘the how good the relationship is’ and the attributional dimensions, in accordance to previous research evidence in intimate relationships (e.g., Berscheid & Ammazzalorso, 2003; Clore & Ortony, 2010; Bradbury & Fincham, 1987; Fitness & Fletcher, 1993; Planalp & Fitness, 1999; Stephanou & Balkamou, 2011). The fact that attributions were more powerfully associated with the emotions in the perceived bad than good adolescent-parent relationship is consistent with the notion that individuals search for explanations of their negative than positive experiences (Weiner, 1985, 2002). Locus of causality in the perceived good adolescent-parent relationship, and stability, along with personal controllability, in the perceived bad adolescent-parent relationship were found to have the most powerful association with the majority of the emotions, partly contrarily to the notion that each attributional dimension is related to specific kind of emotions. Furthermore, external controllability was not associated with the emotions, suggesting the tendency of the adolescents to focus on themselves in understanding their social interactions. However, research needs to validate this speculation.

Also, in contrast to our hypothesis, the adolescents’ intuitive appraisal rather than their attributional appraisal for their perceived good relationships with their parents was linked to most of their attribution- dependent emotions, underling the significant role of the good relationship itself in their subjective well-being. On the contrary, the pattern was reverse with respect to the adolescents’ perceptions of their bad relationships with their parents, showing that they searched for explanations for their negative events.

4.4 Implications of the Findings in Adolescents’ Life and in Future Research

This research, in consistency with other studies and Steinberg et al.’s (1992) suggestion “Adolescents’ perception of their parents’ behavior is as important an influence on their development as are parents’ actual behaviors” (p. 1270), examined the adolescent’s perceptions of their relationships with the parents. Although this perspective delights the topic, parental reports or observational measures would contribute to the examination. Also, the data for this research were gathered at one point in time. Future research should examine the adolescent-parent relationship through time, and how their cognitive and emotional experiences influence the quality of the relationship in the future. Research is also needed to investigate the role of adolescents’ beliefs and expectancies about the ideal parental relationship on the observed associations.

Despite these limitations, the findings from the present study are meaningful. As it is well known, good adolescent-parent relationship was important for the adolescents. Consequently, adolescents should be helped develop the capacity to make and maintain satisfying relationships with their parents. This capacity is acquired through personal, historical and environmental factors (Blas, 2007; Buss, 2000; Carr, 2005).

The findings from the present study also support that the adolescents were involved in their relationships with their parents cognitively and emotionally. These processes might have effects on relationship expectations and partners’ actual behaviour. Attributional retraining (Seligman, 2002) helps people to change maladaptive attributional pattern of interpersonal relationships, and understanding the nature and function of emotions within good / bad relationship is essential. In addition, emotional expression influences partners’ behaviour (Clark, Pataki, & Carver, 1996), and adolescents are needed to be aware of it.

Overall, the findings from this study indicate the importance of examining adolescent-parent relationship from the adolescents' point of view with respect to evaluation, attributions and emotions.

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