INVESTIGATING THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN META-EMOTION

APPROACHES, PARENTAL STRESS, OUTSIDE SUPPORT,

AND EDUCATION LEVELS

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ABSTRACT

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Parenting literature has been extensively investigated throughout the years

(Baumrind, 1967; Hawk & Holden, 2006; Lewis, 1981; Stettler & Katz, 2014). However,

research about parents' meta-emotion approaches is lacking (Gottman & Declaire, 1997;

Norman & Furnes, 2016). The purpose of this current study was to fill gaps in the

literature about meta-emotion. Specifically, parental stress, outside parental support, and

education levels were investigated in terms of how they influenced parents' meta-

emotion approaches. Variables of interest that were also assessed included child's age,

child's gender, and the number of children in the family.

A total of 143 participants completed respective surveys on PsychData. Their

responses were analyzed using linear regression. Results indicated that low levels of

parental stress were associated with high use of an emotion coaching (EC) meta-emotion

approach, while high levels of stress were associated with parents reporting high uses of

the parental rejection of negative emotion (PR) and feelings of uncertainty/

ineffectiveness in emotion socialization (UI) meta-emotion approaches.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Parenting approaches and behaviors have received considerable attention throughout the last several decades (Baumrind, 1967; Gottman & Declaire, 1997; Lewis, 1981; Solem, Christophersen, & Martinussen, 2011; Verhoeven, Bogels, & van der Bruggen, 2011). Well-known research on parenting styles has addressed and explored the contribution of numerous variables such as parental characteristics, children's traits, and environmental factors in how they relate to parenting behaviors (Baumrind, 1967; Gottman & Declaire, 1997). However, the consideration of parental thoughts and behaviors in regard to their emotions and their children's emotions is an area where research is lacking. Specifically, research is needed to examine the role that outside variables such as parental stress, parental outside support, and education level might have in the way parents think about their own emotions, as well as the emotions of their children and how these thoughts might impact their parenting behaviors. Parents' thoughts about their emotions and their children's emotions are what researchers refer to as *meta-emotion* (Gottman, Katz, & Hooven, 1996).

Research is also needed on other factors as well, such as number of children in the family and children's ages in terms of how these variables may affect meta-emotion approaches, parental stress, and parental outside support. The aim of the current study was to address these gaps in the parenting literature and explore the impact that parental meta-emotion might play in parenting behaviors.

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The variables of parental stress, outside parental support, and education levels in terms of how they may affect meta-emotion approaches parents use towards their children are important to investigate in order to fill gaps in the literature. Previous research has primarily focused on parenting styles, as well as the environmental factors that may impact them (Baumrind, 1967; Kawabata, Alink, Tseng, Van Ijzendoorn, & Crick, 2011). For instance, research has indicated that parenting characteristics, such as caring and affectionate behaviors exhibited by parents, may lead to children who display prosocial, or helping deeds towards others (Kawabata et al., 2011). In comparison, the same study provides evidence that parents who are more authoritarian, or those who exhibit demanding and non-reciprocal behaviors towards their children, may be more likely to raise children who display aggressive behaviors (Kawabata et al., 2011).

Previous research has also focused on the role of children's temperaments and how they may influence parenting behaviors (Stight, Gallagher, & Kelley, 2008; Thomas, Chess, & Birch, 1970). The reciprocal relationship between children's temperaments and parenting approaches that adults use is important to investigate within the field of child development to further uncover factors that impact parenting and ultimately, children's outcomes.

Similarly, environmental factors, such as social outside support received from others, maternal age, and education levels have all been found to impact adults' parenting characteristics (Bornstein, Putnick, Suwalsky, & Gini, 2006). However, studies are lacking

when considering the concept of meta-emotion and how meta-emotion approaches that parents exhibit may vary based on specific external variables.

Meta-Emotion

The term *meta-emotion* is described as the type of views parents hold about their own emotions, as well as the emotions of their children (Gottman et al., 1996). Research has indicated that parental perceptions of their emotions and their children's emotions may be indicators related to certain parenting characteristics they display (Legace-Seguin & Coplan, 2005). There are four specific types of meta-emotion approaches that will be addressed in this study. These categories include *emotion coaching, parental rejection of negative emotion, parental acceptance of negative emotion,* and *feelings of uncertainty/ ineffectiveness in emotion socialization* approaches. Each approach differs with the levels of guidance, encouragement of negative emotion, and acceptance of negative emotion that parents display towards their children in response to their children's behaviors (Paterson et al., 2012).

Specifically, an *emotion coaching* meta-emotion approach is characterized by parents who acknowledge and guide their children's emotions (Gottman et al., 1996). If children express negative behaviors, parents who adopt the *emotion coaching* approach are likely to guide their children to express their emotions in more prosocial ways. In comparison, a meta-emotion approach of *parental rejection of negative emotion* may be defined as parents who do not guide their children's negative behaviors, nor do parents acknowledge their children's emotions (Paterson et al., 2012). Parents who adopt a

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parental acceptance of negative emotion meta-emotion approach are those who encourage their children's emotions and behaviors, but do not offer guidance to their children about how they can positively express their emotions. Finally, parents who adopt a *feelings of uncertainty/ ineffectiveness in emotion socialization* meta-emotion approach are classified as those who may not obtain knowledge about how to guide their children's emotions and behaviors (Paterson et al., 2012). As a result, these parents are not likely to guide their children's emotions or encourage their children's emotional expressions.

Meta-emotion approaches parents use are significant, since they are associated with children's social and emotional development (Wilson, Havighurst, & Harley, 2012), and namely, children's emotion regulation abilities. A more in depth discussion of the importance of meta-emotion approaches and how they are associated with children's outcomes will be presented in subsequent sections. In addition, these meta-emotion concepts will be described further in the literature review.

Stress, Outside Parental Support, and Education Levels

There are numerous factors that affect home environments and ultimately might impact children's overall development. Research has already established the role that environmental factors such as outside parental support, stress levels, and parental education might play in parenting behaviors. However, research has not investigated the impact these variables might have on parental meta-emotion approaches.

Thompson and Prottas (2005) indicated that stress is a variable that may affect the overall climate of home environments. Specifically, the researchers found that stress

derived from sources such as family demands and one's occupation may in turn affect

individuals' levels of life satisfaction. In turn, it is posited that types of parenting

approaches adults adopt may be affected by levels of parental stress that adults experience.

Reearch conducted by Beer and Moneta (2012) produced similar results in that the ways

parents handled stressors within their environments directly impacted their parenting

approaches. Despite a plethora of research conducted on parenting styles and stress,

minimal research has been performed on the association of stress and how it may affect the

types of meta-emotion approaches parents exhibit.

Outside parental support is also a variable of interest. The combination of variables

related to outside parental support, meta-emotion, and stress have not been heavily

researched, which further underscores the need of this current study. Previous research has

primarily focused on family structures (single and dual parent households) in terms of how

outside support may impact their parenting behaviors (Solem et al., 2011). Research has

also investigated outside parental support in the form of relationships parents form with

others, such as family or friends and how this type of outside support may impact their

parenting approaches (Green, Furrer, & McAllister, 2007). Results have indicated that

parents who receive greater amounts of outside support from others are more likely to

perceive their interactions with their children in a positive light, as compared to parents

who do not receive a high abundance of outside support. In addition, parents who receive

outside support from others are more likely to form positive relationships with their

children as compared to parents who do not have such outside support systems (Green et

al., 2007). Despite the consideration of these variables in past studies, research has not specifically focused on the role of parents' meta-emotion approaches and how they may be impacted by social outside support parents receive.

Demographic factors such as education levels have also been shown to impact parenting behaviors. For instance, Dubow, Boxer, and Huesmann (2009) indicated that parents with higher education levels were more likely to influence the probability that their children would set high educational goals and in turn receive influential jobs when they grew older. These achievements may in turn be attributed to positive relationships parents hold with their children, such as those that encouarge many interactions that integrate cognitive stimulation and positive guidance towards emotions their children express.

Research has also demonstrated that education levels may affect parental meta-emotion approaches and overall relationships formed with their children (Chen, Lin, & Lin, 2012). This may be attributed to certain factors, such as knowledge gained about parenting practices or mere experiences (Bornstein et al., 2006). However, more research is necessary to examine the role that parental education might play in which meta-emotion approach parents tend to use. Although all these variables have been examined from the perspective of parenting research, additional research is needed in this field to further examine the impact of education, outside parental support, and parental stress, and how they all might affect the types of meta-emotion approaches parents exhibit towards their children. These factors are important to investigate, since meta-emotion approaches have

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been found to affect children's social and emotional development by directly influencing children's abilities to regulate their emotions (Wilson et al., 2012).

Child's Age, Child's Gender, and Number of Children

Other variables that will be considered in this study include child's age, child's gender, and number of children in the family. Research is needed on these variables in terms of how they may be associated with meta-emotion approaches parents adopt. By factoring these variables into this current study, it will provide a clearer picture as to how they may be associated with parental stress levels and social outside support.

Child's age. Research has indicated that parenting practices evolve as children get older (Burke, Pardini, & Loeber, 2008). For instance, more guidance may be needed when children are young, but as children grow older, they are more likely to desire autonomy. As a result, parenting styles or approaches may become less involved, as compared to when children are younger. This in turn may influence parents' beliefs about their children's emotions and the amount of involvement parents have with guiding their children's emotions or electing to ignore them. Also, younger children are more likely to rely on their parents, who may be key individuals that play a role with shaping their children's social competence skills and knowledge in social settings (Edwards, 2014).

Child's gender. Research has found an association between children's gender and parents' reactions towards their children's behaviors (Biblarz & Stacey, 2010; Raley & Binachi, 2006). Even though conformity to gender-specified roles has changed in the past several decades, some parents raise children based upon their expectations of what

children's behaviors should align with in terms of their gender (Kane, 2006). For instance, some parents believe that expressing emotions is more common or more accepted among female children than male children (Biblarz & Stacey, 2010; Raley & Binanchi, 2006). As a result, these parents may not encourage sons to openly express their emotions; however, some families whose perceptions do not reflect gender stereotyped norms may encourage these types of displays. The current study is needed to examine whether child's gender is a variable that influences meta-emotion approaches that parents adopt, as child's gender may affect parents' perceptions about their child's emotions if parents hold gender stereotypes.

Number of children. The number of children in the family is another variable of interest in the current study. Previous research has indicated that parents who have more than two children may be more open to receiving outside support from others about parenting practices (Edwards, 2014). However, research is lacking in regards to how the number of children in the family may affect parents' meta-emotion approaches. The current study will close the gaps in literature surrounding these variables.

Theoretical Framework

The foundation of the social cognition approach was established by Dollard, Miller, Doob, Mowrer, and Sears (1939) who combined learning and the psychoanalytic theory in attempts to explain human behavior. Specifically, literature written by Dollard et al. described factors that influenced children's emotion socialization of aggression. Along the same lines, Sears explained that individuals' personalities and social development have an interactive, reciprocal relationship that influence each other (Dollard et al., 1939). In 1953,

Bandura and Walters expanded on Sears' work by arguing that factors that influence humans' behaviors should be further investigated. As a result, a focus on imitation and observation learning became a focus for social cognitive researchers (Grusec, 1992).

There are key components of the social cognition approach, which further describe the processes in which individuals cognitive decisions are made. These components will be discussed for the purposes of further explaining how they relate to parents' thought processes about their children's emotions, which is associated with meta-emotion approaches parents adopt.

Key Components to Social Cognition

Bandura (2001) describes social cognition by illustrating its association to individuals' agency, or consciousness. For cognitive decisions to be made, processing of agency includes individuals' active engagement in *intentionality, forethough, self-reactiveness*, and *self-reflectiveness*. *Intentionality* entails individuals' decisions to partake in events that transpire in life, while *forethought* encompasses planning about how to accomplish a goal or desired outcome. Similarly, *self-reactiveness* is associated with action that drives individuals and gives them the motivation needed to achieve their goals. Finally, a process of *self-reflection* occurs, where individuals assess morals, beliefs, and meanings about their lives in terms of how they influence their behaviors and decisions (Bandura, 2001).

Application to this Study

In relation to this study, the social cognition approach focuses on assessing the processes in which parents think about their own emotions, their children's emotions, and their parenting methods (Bandura, 1989; Holden, 2010). When considering meta-emotion, parents' reactions and behaviors responding to their children's behaviors may greatly depend upon their perceptions about these behaviors. For example, parents' meta-emotion approaches depend upon whether they believe their children's behaviors are acceptable or unacceptable. If parents deem their behaviors as unacceptable, then they may assess them for the purposes of guiding alternative behaviors that they believe are more appropriate. There are various types of social cognitions that parents may use. These include *attributions, beliefs, attitudes, decision-making abilities, expectations, goals, perceptions, problem-solving ability, self-perception,* and *metaparenting*. These components will be addressed in greater detail in subsequent sections.

Attributions involve parents' evaluation of their children's behaviors, which in turn may affect their perceptions about their children's behaviors (Holden, 2010). For instance, if parents associate kindness with their child's prosocial behavior, they may perceive their child to be more helpful as compared to parents who might associate kindness with a natural personality characteristic.

Beliefs about children, as well as parenting are also a focus with the social cognition approach (Holden, 2010). Parental beliefs can be separated into four different types, which include their *content*, *quality*, *sources*, and *effects* (Goodnow & Collins,

1990). The *content of beliefs* outlines parents' beliefs about how children's characteristics, such as their physical development affects their maturation. In addition, the *content of beliefs* centers attention to the processes in which parents impact their children's development. In comparison, the *quality of beliefs* outlines the structure and accuracy of the beliefs, while the *sources of beliefs* may be affected by the environmental influences, such as culture, caregivers, teachers, school, and technology. Finally, the *effects of beliefs* component highlights the proposition that parents may have a greater understanding about the rearing of their children if they are deemed more socially competent. *Attitudes* that parents possess may in turn affect their parenting approaches as well (Holden, 2010). For example, mothers reared by harsh parents may also hold unrealistic expectations about their children's development, which in turn may produce negative attitudes about their children (Holden, 2010). This in turn may affect parents' perceptions about meta-emotion approaches they adopt.

Another component of the social cognition approach includes *problem solving* and *decision making* (Holden, 2010). These two concepts are developed when parents gain experiences with their children. Through trial and error, parents learn that actions or behaviors they exhibit may influence their children's development. An example Holden (2010) gave was parents whose infant is crying may be able to soothe the infant quicker than a couple who does not have an infant.

The newest and last identified component of the social cognition approach is *metaparenting* (Hawk & Holden, 2006). The term *metaparenting* refers to parents'

thoughts and assessments of their children's behaviors, how to solve issues that arise with their children, as well as how to solve problems that may affect their children's behaviors or development.

The types of social cognitions that parents may exhibit are important to the current study for the purposes of establishing the basis of parents' perceptions of their children's behaviors and how they may impact the types of meta-emotion they adopt. Cognitively understanding parents' thought processes are a key towards understanding meta-emotion approaches they use.

Statement of the Problem

Additional research is needed to further understand factors that impact meta-emotion approaches (Morris, Silk, Steinberg, Myers, & Robinson, 2007; Norman & Furnes, 2016). This study will fill in gaps in the literature when considering the impact of variables, such as outside parental support, stress, education levels, child's gender, child's age, and number of children in the family when considering how these factors may affect parents' adoption of certain meta-emotion approaches. This study is needed within the field of child development for numerous reasons. By understanding how these variables impact meta-emotion approaches, researchers, educators, and those working within the field of child development can assist parents with becoming aware of the significance of these factors and how they can affect the processing of their emotions as well as guiding their children to process their own emotions. As Wilson et al. (2012) noted, meta-emotion approaches are directly related to children's abilities to regulate their emotions.

Children's abilities to regulate their emotions in turn affects their social interactions with others and emotion socialization practices, which all affect the degrees to which their emotions are processed and expressed (Hakim-Larson, Parker, Lee, Goodwin, & Voelker, 2006; Wilson et al., 2012).

This has significant implications for children's overall development. For instance, the ability to regulate emotions is associated with children's executive functioning in their brain, which also affects their attention, inhibitions of negative emotions, and memory functioning (Graziano, Reavis, Keane, & Calkins, 2007). By understanding the factors that influence parents' meta-emotion approaches, researchers are further uncovering factors that affect children's overall cognitive, social, and emotional development.

Research Questions

This study was guided by the following research questions:

1) What is the relationship between parental stress, education, and parental outside support on meta-emotion approaches when controlling for potential covariates (child's age, child's gender, and the number of children in the family)?

2) Is there an interaction between parental stress and parental outside support when predicting meta-emotion approaches parents use?

Hypotheses

It was hypothesized that the relationship of parental stress, education, and parental outside support would yield significant associations. Specifically, it was predicted that higher amounts of parental stress would influence meta-emotion approaches by reducing efforts parents exert when considering how to guide their children's meta-emotion approaches. Thus, higher amounts of stress may lead to adopting the parental rejection of negative emotion, acceptance of negative emotion, or feelings of uncertainty in emotion socialization meta-emotion approaches. This was predicted, as it was postulated that parents who have low levels of stress may be able to devote greater amounts of effort to assessing their perceptions about their children's emotional expressions, without being negatively influenced by particular stressors within their environments.

It was also predicted that parents with high education levels would adopt an emotion coaching meta-emotion approach, as they may be more aware of the significance of guiding their children's emotions due to understanding the role of meta-emotion and its association with children's development of social competence. In terms of outside parental support, it was hypothesized that parents who have a greater amount of outside parental support would adopt an emotion coaching meta-emotion approach, since the outside support parents receive may increase their efforts towards thinking about their children's emotional expressions. In comparison, it was predicted that parents with lower amounts of parental outside support would adopt meta- emotion approaches such as

parental rejection of negative emotion, parental acceptance of negative emotions, or feelings of uncertainty in emotion socialization settings.

In terms child's age, it was hypothesized that the younger children are in the family, the more likely parents would evaluate their children's emotional expressions and engage in an emotion coaching meta-emotion approach. In contrast, it was predicted that parents would be less likely to engage in emotion coaching approaches if their children are older.

When considering child's gender, it was predicted that parents of male children would be less likely than parents of female children to adopt an emotion coaching meta-emotion approach. In terms of the number of children in the family, it was hypothesized that more children in the family would be associated with less reflection about their children's emotional expressions, thus using the meta-emotion approaches of parental rejection of negative emotion, parental acceptance of negative emotion, or feelings of uncertainty in emotion socialization settings. In comparison, having less children may allow parents more time to ponder their children's behaviors and emotions, thereby leading to an emotion coaching meta-emotion approach.

It was also hypothesized that there will be an interaction between parental stress and outside support parents receive. Specifically, it was predicted that even though parents may experience high levels of parental stress, outside support they receive may lessen the effects of stress in their lives. As a result, it was predicted that high levels of outside support would yield emotion coaching meta-emotion approaches, regardless of

the stress levels that parents experience. In comparison, it was hypothesized that low levels of outside support would be associated with high stress levels and meta-emotion approaches that align with parental rejection of negative emotion, parental acceptance of negative emotion, or feelings of uncertainty in emotion socialization settings.

<div align="center">**Definition of Terms**</div>

Emotion Coaching Meta-Emotion Approach

Emotion coaching (EC) is defined as a meta-emotion approach that may be characterized by parents' awareness of their feelings as well as their children's emotions (Hakim-Larson et al., 2006). In turn, adults who elicit this type of meta-emotion approach are likely to guide their children with the ability to regulate or further understand their own emotions. An example of this approach includes a parent who sees an area of opportunity with his or her child's regulation of emotions. For example, a parent might observe their child screaming at a sibling, instead of talking about how a child's sibling makes them feel. In response, the parent may talk with the child about how to label emotions or what emotions look like so that the child may know how to use their words to express themselves in the future.

Feelings of Uncertainty/Ineffectiveness in Emotion Socialization

Feelings of uncertainty/ineffectiveness (UI) in emotion socialization is defined as a meta-emotion approach where parents do not offer guidance in reaction to their

children's negative emotions (Paterson et al., 2012). Similarly, parents who adopt this meta-emotion approach are not likely to encourage their children's emotional expressions.

Meta-Emotion

Meta-emotion is defined as a cognitive processing of emotions, where parents process or understand their own emotions as well as their children's emotions (Hakim-Larson et al., 2006).

Metaparenting

Metaparenting is defined as a social cognition approach that focuses on parents' thoughts and assessments of their children's behaviors and how issues that arise may be resolved (Hawk & Holden, 2006).

Outside Parental Suppport

Outside parental support is defined as the amount of assistance parents have with their daily parenting responsibilities, such as access or outside support provided by family members, friends, or facilities (Sarason, Levine, Basham, & Sarason, 1983). In addition, outside parental support includes the amount of assistance and guidance that others provide daily.

Parental Acceptance of Negative Emotion

Parental acceptance of negative emotion (PA) is a meta-emotion approach characterized by parents who do not offer guidance in response to negative emotions their

children display even though they may encourage their children to express emotions (Paterson et al., 2012).

Parental Rejection of Negative Emotion

Parental rejection of negative emotion (PR) is a meta-emotion approach characterized by parents who do not offer guidance in response to negative emotions their children display (Paterson et al., 2012). In addition, parents using this meta-emotion approach are not likely to encourage their children's emotional expressions.

Social Cognition Approach

The social cognition approach is defined as adults' cognitions about parenting and how they may affect the types of rearing methods they use towards their children (Bandura, 1989; Holden, 2010).

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Delimitations of the Current Study

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Despite information that was gathered from this study about outside parental support, parental stress, and education levels in terms of how they impact parents' meta-emotion approaches, delimitations existed. For instance, a delimitation included the use of self-reports to measure parents' emotions and behaviors. This was identified as a delimitation, since there may be issues with honesty and full disclosure of their emotions or actions. In addition, a delimitation included selection of one child to reflect on while completing the questionnaires, in terms of their gender and age. Therefore, if parents

have multiple children with different ages and genders, the measures only captured data from one child.

Language was also identified as a delimitation, as the questionnaires are only available in English. Despite these delimitations, this study shed light into the significance of meta-emotion approaches that parents use towards their children and how these approaches may differ when considering outside parental support, parental stress, and education levels. Another a delimitation of this study was the exclusion of a life stress variable. While some stress measures examine both life stress and parenting stress, the measure used in this study only focused on stressors originating from parental experiences.

Summary

The current study assessed outside parental support, parental stress, and education levels the role these variables might play in the meta-emotion approaches that parents adopt. Other variables including child's age, gender, and the number of children in families. To further highlight the significance of parents' perceptions and how they can impact the meta-emotion approaches they adopt, the social cognition approach was used as a theoretical framework from which to examine this topic.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

A literature review outlining the variables of meta-emotion, parental stress, education levels, outside support parents receive, child's age, child's gender, and number of children in the family is included in this chapter. Considerations regarding the origin of parenting literature and the history of meta-emotion, previous research conducted on this topic, and an integration of theory are described.

Early Parenting Literature

The emergence of meta-emotion stemmed from early parenting literature dating back to the late 1800s. Specifically, pioneering investigations on parenting and parenting styles began as early as 1899 when Sears constructed the first study related to home and school punishments by integrating questionnaires completed by parents that assessed their discipline strategies (see also Holden, 2010). These questionnaires were influential, as they paved the way for more in-depth studies about parenting, as well as the role of discipline strategies and how they may impact the types of behaviors parents exhibit toward their children.

Parenting literature transitioned in the 1920s and 1930s, when the importance of parents abandoning authoritarian parenting styles was emphasized (Gottman & Declaire, 1997). In the mid 1960s, parenting literature by Ginott (1969) focused on placing an emphasis on parents' emotions as well as their children's emotions in the form of an interactive dyad. These ideals were expressed in books published by Ginott, some of which included *Between Parent and Child*, *Between Parent and Teenager*, and *Teacher*

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and Child. Gottman and Declaire (1997) noted that this type of work published by Ginott pointed research in the field toward investigating emotions within families specifically, by focusing on interactions between parents and their children. Ginott also emphasized the importance of parents focusing on their children's emotions and the types of emotions behind their actions or behaviors (Gottman & Declaire, 1997). This early work was instrumental in laying the foundation for work in an area researchers now refer to as meta-emotion (Gottman et al., 1996). The term meta-emotion may be defined as parents' cognitive processing of both their own emotions as well as those of their children.

While some researchers considered the role of emotion in parenting practices, others were looking at more specific parenting characteristics. Among these researchers were Baldwin, Kalhorn, and Breese (1949). Specifically, Baldwin et al. examined parenting dimensions by researching specific parenting behaviors associated with these dimensions. The parenting dimensions that surfaced from this research included *warmth, objectivity towards children's behaviors,* and *control.* These dimensions may be measured by *democracy*, *indulgence, restrictiveness, clarity,* and *interference.*

Democracy may be defined as a display of warmth toward children by parents, while also providing opportunities for children to engage in parents' decision making about rules set within households (Baldwin et al., 1949). Furthermore, parents adopting this parenting dimension tend to give children responsibility for their own actions, while also providing children with intellectual stimulation that will assist them with academic pursuits.

In comparison, adults whose parenting style aligns with *indulgent* parenting dimensions include those who are likely to have anxiety about parenting, while being

protective of their children (Baldwin et al., 1949). In addition, these parents tend to display warmth and control over their children's behaviors. Examples of *indulgent* parenting include those who either exhibit warmth and protectiveness over their children, or those who are anxious and restrictive of their children's decisions (Baldwin, Kalhorn, & Breese, 1945).

Restrictiveness, as defined here, refers to parents who moderately or highly restrict their children's decision making and autonomy. In comparison, *clarity* refers to the degree to which parents enforce household rules, while *interference* reflects suggestions or recommendations parents provide to their children about their choices.

In research conducted by Baldwin et al. (1945), an association was found between children's outcomes and specific parenting dimensions. For example, children reared by parents who displayed low amounts of democratic behaviors were likely to display lower levels of intellectual curiosity than other children in the sample. This is in contrast to the democratic parenting dimension in which parents were more likely to support their children's explorations within the environment, while encouraging their children to be engaged in activities with other peers. Similarly, these results revealed that parents who adopted democratic parenting dimensions were more likely to raise competent, intellectually curious children who excelled in social settings with their peers than those who typified other parenting dimensions (Baldwin et al., 1945).

With research that began in the 1960s, Redl (1966) outlined the importance of adult intervention when children express emotions that surpass the norm of expected behaviors (e.g. asocial behaviors where children hurt others either physically or emotionally). As researchers delved into exploring parental characteristics in the 1960s,

concern began to grow regarding the validity of self-report measures due to biases and differing perceptions that surfaced among raters (Power, 2013). As a result, many researchers shifted to observational coding techniques. Within that decade, researchers also began deeper investigations into various characteristics of parents. Specifically, research examining cognitive approaches, scaffolding, and family rituals became popular. For example, the structure that emerged during this time frame focused on the quality and quantity of organized environments in which children were reared. In addition, the amount of consistency children received from their parents, as well as parents' overall involvement within their children's lives, was highlighted more.

Parenting Dimensions to Parenting Styles

The focus of parenting research shifted back to parenting styles in the mid 1960s when Baumrind (1967) identified common styles of parenting behaviors, building upon the work of Baldwin et al. (1945). The focus of Baumrind's (1967) research included assessing how parents differed on parenting dimensions, which included control, maturity, communication between parents and their children, and the amount of nurturing parents displayed. These parenting dimensions outlined by Baumrind (1967) were further grouped into specific patterns.

The parenting styles or patterns that surfaced after conducting this research included *authoritative* parenting, where parents were identified as displaying high levels of control, along with high levels of warmth and nurture (Baumrind, 1967). In addition, these parents were characterized as enforcing their own perspective, while also acknowledging their children's interests and opinions. *Authoritative* parenting was associated with child outcomes that included higher levels of social competence and

social skills (Baumrind, 1967). Furthermore, these children seemed to generally possess a desire to achieve their goals, higher levels of self-esteem, and were more likely to perform well in academic settings than peers reared with a different parenting style.

A second parenting style identified by Baumrind (1967) was the *permissive* style. This parenting style was characterized by parents who accepted and affirmed their children's impulses and desires. Furthermore, parents who adopted a *permissive* parenting style were not controlling and did not make demands that required children to take responsibility. Specifically, these parents expressed high warmth and nurturing behaviors towards their children. Children reared by parents with a *permissive* parenting style tended to possess a dependent personality, and were not as likely to set goals for themselves to achieve (Baumrind, 1967). Later research has shown that children raised by parents who adopt a *permissive* parenting style tend not to have guidance from their parents, usually leaving them without direction about certain life situations (Talib, Mohamad, & Mamat, 2011).

Finally, a third type of parenting identified by Baumrind (1966) is *authoritarian*. Adults who adopted an *authoritarian* parenting style were likely to control their children's behaviors and restrict their autonomy, while enforcing household rules. Furthermore, *authoritarian* parenting was associated with high demandingness and parents who are not likely to express warmth and nurture towards their children (Baumrind, 1966). Characteristics of children who are raised by parents who adopt an *authoritarian* parenting style usually include a lack of independence, a lower ability to exhibit assertive behaviors when necessary, and low academic achievement (Baumrind,

1967). More recent research has confirmed Baumrind's findings, revealing that children reared in *authoritarian* households tend to not fare well in social settings and possess high levels of anxiety (Talib et al., 2011).

Adding to this literature, Maccoby and Martin (1983) further expanded Baumrind's theory by focusing on high and low levels of responsiveness and demandingness that may be evident in each of the parenting dimensions. While investigating the characteristics related with each of these parenting types, Maccoby and Martin labeled a fourth parenting style- *uninvolved*. This type of parenting style is described as one in which adults do not provide high levels of responsiveness, demand, or nurturing behaviors towards their children, resulting in parents who may tend to neglect their children's needs or wants.

Warmth has been identified a key dimension of effective parenting, associated with children's development of self-respect and parental acceptance (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Children reared by parents using an *uninvolved* parenting style are not likely to receive warmth from their parents, which leads to lower levels of social competence and academic achievement, as compared to children of parents who employ the other parenting styles (Talib et al., 2011). These findings highlight the association between parenting styles and its implications on children's development (Baumrind, 1967; Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Thus, warm and responsive parenting is an important component for assisting children with developing their emotional expressions and overall social competence (Maccoby, 1992).

Children's dimensions. Baumrind (1967) also investigated dimensions related to children's characteristics for the purposes of investigating the association between

parenting and children's behaviors. Specifically, five dimensions that were identified included *self-control*, *self-reliance*, *peer affiliation*, *mood*, and *approach-avoidance tendencies* (Baumrind, 1967). These dimensions will be discussed, as they highlight the history behind parenting and how it led to the steps in which the concept of meta-emotion was created.

The five dimensions listed previously surfaced after Baumrind (1967) performed observations on three and four year-old children for 14 weeks in which children were rated by their preschool teachers. After ratings took place between the preschool teachers and psychologists, a total of 52 children who earned the five highest or five lowest rankings on two or more dimensions were categorized as subjects and were further observed within the laboratory.

Specific tests included presenting puzzles to the children, so that each one either had an easy success with completing them or experienced difficulties piecing them together (Baumrind, 1967). Using a variety of assessment strategies, certain interpersonal attributes of each child were measured. Out of these activities, the five child behavior dimensions (*self-control, self-reliance, peer affiliation, mood,* and *approach-avoidance*) were classified. These dimensions are important to outline, since a reciprocal relationship exists between children's characteristics and parenting behaviors (Tamm, Holden, Nakonezny, Swart, & Hughes, 2011; Thomas et al., 1970).

Cognitive Processes and Meta-Parenting

Cognitions, or thought processes associated with parents' perceptions towards their parenting, also emerged in the literature about parenting and parenting behaviors. This adoption of a social cognition perspective lead to the concept of meta-parenting

(Hawk & Holden, 2003), and further investigation into how parents think about child-rearing. Meta-parenting examines cognitive thought processes and perceptions about parenting, such as how an individual thinks about the way they parent. It has been established that parenting behaviors exhibited by adults towards their children are associated with the concept of meta-parenting (Hawk & Holden, 2003). Specifically, meta-parenting is associated with parents' deliberate cognitive thoughts about not only their relationships with their children, but how environmental factors may influence their children's development, as well (Hawk & Holden, 2006). The factors that ultimately affect the degree to which parents engage in meta-parenting approaches include their own traits, the environment, and their children's characteristics. Types of meta-parenting approaches include *anticipating, assessing, reassessing,* and *problem-solving*.

In regard to meta-parenting, *anticipating* entails parents' anticipation about events that may occur within their children's lives, based upon their developmental stages or things that take place within their environments (Hawk & Holden, 2003). For example, parents may anticipate whether their children will use words to express their emotions or express their emotions by the use of physical actions, such as hitting. In comparison, *assessing* includes the task where parents may perform evaluations on themselves, their children, and the context in which events occur within their environments that affect their cognitive perceptions. *Reassessing* provides adults with opportunities to reflect upon past instances and evaluate their behaviors as well as their children's characteristics based upon the circumstances that may have influenced them. For instance, parents may

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reassess an instance where their child used physical aggression with a peer when playing a game due to frustration. Due to this reflection, parents may reassess ways in which they could assist their child with expressing his or her frustrations through words in the future. The fourth type of meta-parenting is *problem solving*. *Problem solving* is exemplified when adults use parenting experiences to engage in abstract thought by identifying problems as well as possible solutions to child rearing issues (Hawk & Holden, 2006). For example, if children get into a disagreement with one another, parents can problem solve and discuss together about what can be done in the future to reduce these instances.

Research conducted by Hawk and Holden (2006) further illustrated the concept of meta-parenting. Using a sample of 116 mothers, specific variables such as meta-parenting approaches, stress experienced by parents, and social desirability were measured. Results indicated that mothers of younger children spent more time assessing and anticipating their children's behaviors. These parents had higher meta-parenting scores, as compared to mothers of older children. Also, mothers who had fewer children tended to engage in more problem solving approaches as compared to mothers who had more children. Further results indicated that participants who experienced high levels of stress were more likely to reassess their children's behaviors, as compared to parents with low stress levels.

Bi-Directionality

Research has indicated that adults' parenting approaches are directly affected by their children's dispositions, or temperaments (Lewis, 1981; Tamm et al., 2011; Thomas et al. 1970). The reciprocal relationship between adults' parenting approaches and

children's temperaments relate to the concept of bi-directionality (Lewis, 1981). For instance, parents whose children elicit challenging behaviors may not arrive at solutions about how to guide their children to more effective ways of expressing themselves. In turn, this may impact parents' meta-parenting approaches, which are associated with overall cognitions about meta-emotion (Tamm et al., 2011).

A longitudinal study conducted by Shaffer, Lindhiem, Kolko, and Trentacosta (2013) further illuminated bi-directionality. Specific variables that were the focus of the study included children's outward display of behaviors, as well as parenting styles. Participants included 139 parents and their children between the ages of 6 to 11 years. A part of the study included treatment groups in which the children participated for the purposes of reducing their behavior problems (such as conduct disorder and oppositional defiant disorder). Due to parents' and children's participation in the treatment groups, parents gained a greater understanding about how to respond to their children's behaviors. For instance, both negative parenting practices and children's display of asocial behaviors decreased after time spent in the treatment groups. These findings add to the literature, as they provide support for the importance of understanding the bi-directional nature of the parent-child relationship.

Parents' Self-Efficacy

Another factor that influences parents' cognitions is self-efficacy (Jones & Prinz, 2005; Merrifield, Gamble, & Yu, 2015; Steca, Bassi, Caprara, & Delle Fave, 2011). Parental self-efficacy is related to parents' beliefs about their ability to perform parenting responsibilities successfully. To investigate this, Steca et al. (2011) gathered 206 parents and their teenage children, who were between 13 to 18 years of age. As part of the

research study, parents completed a self-efficacy scale, while their teenage children completed questionnaires that measured their academic self-efficacy, aggression, depression levels, self-esteem, life satisfaction, support received from parents, and the quality of communication with parents. Results indicated that parents who scored high on the parental self-efficacy measure were more likely to have teenage children with better psychosocial adaptation, described as having high self-efficacy beliefs and fewer internalizing behavioral issues. These teenage children were also more likely to report higher levels of happiness compared to other teenage children whose parents scored low on the parental self-efficacy scale (Steca et al., 2011). Steca et al. (2011) concluded that parents' self-efficacy levels are directly associated with children's outcomes.

The findings from Steca et al.'s (2011) study directly aligned with research conducted by Merrifield et al. (2015). Specifically, Merrifield et al. (2015) assessed parents' self-efficacy levels as they related to parents' and preschool-aged children's characteristics. A total of 350 parents completed questionnaires that assessed their meta-parenting approaches and self-efficacy levels. Results indicated that parents' self-efficacy was positively associated with their meta-parenting approaches. In sum, parenting approaches and meta-parenting processes are influenced by how parents cognitively think about their preschool-aged children's behaviors as well as their own levels of parental self-efficacy (Merrifield et al., 2015; Steca et al., 2011).

Thought processes behind parenting and how parents perceive their own emotions as well as their children's emotions leads to the concept of meta-emotion. Parenting

literature has evolved substantially over the last century. Moving from looking strictly at parenting characteristics, to examining child outcomes and parental cognitions behind parenting characteristics has led researchers to examine parental and child emotions within the context of the parent child relationship. This interest in how parents perceive their own emotions as well as their children's emotions has led research endeavors more recently into the realm of meta-emotion.

The Emergence of Meta-Emotion

As previously discussed, much research has focused on parenting styles, but minimal research has focused on parents' meta-emotion approaches and factors that ultimately affect them. The emergence of meta-emotion came from research that focused on investigating the roles of emotions within marriages (Gottman & Declaire, 1997). Due to the information gained from research that considered the role of emotions in marital relationships and how couples used emotions to communicate, Gottman and his colleague expanded their research agenda to include the role of emotions in children's friendships and social interactions with others. During this same time period, Gottman's development of the meta-emotion interview was developed (Katz & Gottman, 1986). The first study that used the meta-emotion interview asked parents and their school-aged children about the types of emotions they displayed towards one another. Katz and Gottman (1986) also assessed how participants perceived those emotions when specifically assessing the types of marriage structures with which their families were associated.

Due to the identification of meta-emotion, the literature in parenting research in the 1990's focused on parents' overall understanding of their children's behaviors, as

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well as the processing of their children's emotions (Katz, Maliken, & Stettler, 2012). The integration of the meta-emotion philosophy promoted research and the production of literature within the field of child development, as it emphasized the importance of parents' beliefs and thoughts, and in turn their emotions, on how parents guided their children's emotional expressions. Another principle related to the meta-emotion philosophy was the proposition that parents' thoughts about their own emotions are in turn associated with thoughts about their children's emotions. The emergence of meta-emotion opened the doors for expanding how researchers perceive parents' own feelings and how they, in turn, may respond to their own children's expression of emotions.

Seminal research by Eisenberg, Cumberland, and Spinrad (1998) highlighted the emergence of meta-emotion by investigating children's socialization of emotions as well as parents' reactions to children's emotions. These researchers concluded that the types of emotionality exhibited by parents in turn affects children's expressions of emotions, as well as their overall levels of social competence.

More current research has indicated that parents' meta-emotion philosophies may indeed change through the course of their experiences with their children, depending upon their children's ages (Stettler & Katz, 2014). To test this assumption, a total of 40 mothers and 38 fathers completed a meta-emotion interview when their children were 5, 9, and 11 years of age. After analyzing the data, researchers found that parents' coaching of their children's negative emotions increased overall when the children were 5 to 11 years old. Thus, when children were between 5 to 11 years, parents were provided guidance by assisting children with re-directing or dealing with negative emotions that they may have. This research provides insight into the influence of meta-emotion on

parenting and opens the door to additional questions related to this process, such as how education or parental perceptions of support may be related to meta-emotion when parenting.

The concept of meta-emotion is significant, as it aligns with the process in which parents socialize their children's understandings of emotions, how to regulate them, as well as the manner in which they are identified (Gottman & Declaire, 1997). The socialization of emotions include parents' expressions and regulation of emotions, parents' responses to their children's expressions of emotions, as well as the amount of guidance parents provide to their children about their own emotions in terms of how they may be labeled or regulated (Katz et al., 2012).

The Significance of Meta-Emotion

The principle of meta-emotion is distinct from other parenting dimensions researched in previous decades (Baldwin et al., 1945; Katz et al., 2012). Specifically, it was argued that focusing on the types of meta-emotion approaches parents use accounts for more variation in children's adjustment and overall socioemotional development over time than focusing on parenting dimensions alone. In addition, investigating principles related to meta-emotion has led to findings that reveal direct associations between children's behavior issues, physical health, and exhibition of emotions and the types of meta-emotion approaches parents adopt.

For instance, the types of meta-emotion approaches that parents use have been directly related to children's emotion socialization and abilities to regulate their emotions (Paterson et al., 2012). The foundation for children's regulatory abilities emerge within the first five years of life (Florez, 2011); therefore, parenting behaviors that adults

exhibit, as well as how they process and perceive their children's emotions, are influential to the well-being of children's social and emotional development.

Meta-Emotion Philosophy

While parenting research was evolving, the concept of meta-emotion was being conceived. Specifically, Ginott (1994) underscored the importance of adult guidance and its role within children's lives when they express extreme behaviors. Examples of extreme behaviors that children express may include conduct disorders or other emotional actions that deviate from the expected norm. The concept of meta-emotion can also be traced to the field of developmental psychology, which has focused on many variables related to child rearing, such as parenting and parenting behaviors (Gottman et al., 1996). However, despite its varied beginnings, minimal research in the past has highlighted parents' cognitions or thinking about meta-emotion approaches.

The meta-emotion philosophy may be understood by five characteristics that parents display in regard to themselves and their children. These characteristics are: an *awareness* of emotions both in themselves and in their children, a *perception* that any negative emotions children elicit may in turn be used to guide to teach them how to develop positive emotions, a *validation* of their children's emotions, an *opportunity* to assist children with labeling their own emotions, and an *engagement* in utilizing problem-solving skills with children (Gottman et al., 1996).

Meta-Emotion Approaches

Gottman et al. (1996) outlined four original approaches to meta-emotion, which include: *emotion-coaching, laissez-faire, dismissing,* and *disapproving* (Gottman et al., 1996). An *emotion-coaching* approach may be described as a parenting approach where

parents are aware of their feelings and actively engage in assisting their children with regulating and guiding their emotions. In comparison, a *laissez-faire approach* is characterized by parents' acknowledgement of their own emotions and their children's emotions, without providing guidance to their children about regulating their emotions. A *dismissing approach* entails ignoring negative emotions that children display, while not being aware of the parents' own emotions. Finally, a *disapproving approach* includes a lack of awareness of parents' own emotions, as well as their children's emotions, while punishing negative emotions that children may display.

In an effort to investigate the impacts of meta-emotion approaches that adults use in terms of how they respond towards their children's emotions, Hakim-Larson et al., (2006) gathered 31 participants to test this phenomenon. Specifically, parents' meta-emotion approaches, self-expressions towards their children, and the degree to which they coped with their children's negative emotions were measured. Results indicated that parents who scored high in the emotion coaching meta-emotion approach were likely to exhibit high levels of positive self-expressions and encouragement towards their children's behaviors. Further results indicated that parents who had high laissez-faire meta-emotion scores only measured high in expressive encouragement towards their children. In terms of dismissing and disapproving meta-emotion approaches, parents' behaviors were found to be associated with non-outside supportive coping reactions, while their actions towards their children were not associated with outside supportive coping measures (such as encouragement from others).

Lunkenheimer and Cortina (2007) offered additional support for the findings of Hakim-Larson et al.'s (2006) study by measuring the amount of emotion talk in the family,

emotion regulation children expressed, internalizing and externalizing behaviors children

exhibited, as well as children's verbal abilities. A total of 87 families, with a family size

between two to six members were included in this study. Results indicated that parents who

used an emotion coaching meta-emotion approach were more likely to have children with

high emotion regulation abilities compared to parents who used other types of meta-

emotion approaches. Specifically, parents' coaching of negative emotions were related to

emotion regulation more so than parents' coaching of children's positive emotions. In

comparison, it was found that children of parents who use an emotion dismissing meta-

emotion approach may be less likely to regulate their emotions. These findings also aligned

with those of Wilson et al. (2012), who identified the key association between parents'

meta-emotion approaches and how they affect children's overall social and emotional

development. These findings help provide a greater understanding of how parents may

respond to their children's emotions, depending upon the meta-emotion approach they use

(Hakim-Larson et al., 2006; Lunkenheimer & Cortina, 2007); however, the samples in

these studies were quite small and it did not specifically examine participants' demographic

information, such as education levels, or other factors that may be influential to parenting

behaviors like their perceptions of outside support.

More current research on meta-emotion approaches was conducted by Paterson et

al. (2012), who examined parents' philosophies about meta-emotion and whether they

influenced the ways they taught their children about emotions. The purpose of the study

was to create a shortened version of the *Emotion-Related Parenting Styles Self-Test-*

Likert (Gottman et al., 1996). The process included 107 parents of children with and

without developmental disabilities, who completed the *Emotion-Related Parenting Styles Self-Test- Likert*, maternal socialization questionnaires, and a storytelling task that identified participants' emotions and empathy. After statistical calculations, the the *Emotion-Related Parenting Styles Self-Test* was created (Paterson et al., 2012).

Specifically, Paterson et al. (2012) combined the original meta-emotion approaches outlined by Gottman et al. (1996) into the four meta-emotion approaches that were included in the current study. These meta-emotion approaches include: *emotion coaching*, *parental rejection of negative emotion*, *parental acceptance of negative emotion,* and *uncertainty/ineffectiveness in emotion socialization*.

The emotion coaching meta-emotion (EC) subscale (Paterson et al., 2012) mirrored the subscale developed by Gottman et al. (1996); however, the original *dismissing* and *disapproving* subscales were combined into the *parental rejection of negative emotion* (PR) subscale (Paterson et al., 2012). The reason offered for the creation of the rejection of negative emotion related to the various ways in which socialization of emotions can be operationalized and categorized between children who can and cannot regulate their emotions (Legace-Seguin & Coplan, 2005; Paterson et al., 2012). Thus, the single PR subscale was thought to be more accurate in representing emotion socialization.

In addition, the *feelings of uncertainty/ineffectiveness* (UI) meta-emotion approach subscale was created in Paterson's et al. (2012) research. The UI meta-emotion approach represents parents' frustration with their lack of knowledge about responding to their children's emotions. This meta-emotion approach aligns with more of a passive rejection of their children's negative behaviors. Finally, the *parental acceptance of negative emotion* (PA) meta-emotion approach subscale created by Paterson et al. (2012) emerged from the

original laissez-faire subscale from Gottman's et al. (1997) research. The new PA subscale addressed parents' passive acceptance of their children's emotions, without offering guidance to their children about how they can express their negative emotions in ways that assist them with developing emotion regulation (Paterson et al., 2012).

The following table was designed by the researcher to summarize the defining features of each meta-emotion approach when considering themes common to each of them (guidance, encouragement, and acceptance).

Table 1

Meta-Emotion Approaches

	Guidance Provided by Parents Towards Their Children's Emotions	Parents' Encouragement of Their Children's Emotional Expressions	Parents' Acceptance of Their Children's Negative Emotions
Emotion Coaching (EC) Meta-Emotion Approach	High	High	Low
Parental Acceptance (PA) of Meta-Emotion Approach	Low	High	High
Parental Rejection (PR) of Meta-Emotion Approach	Low	Low	Low
Uncertainty/Ineffectiveness in Emotion Socialization (UI) Meta-Emotion Approach	Low	Low	Low

Note. Parents who adopt a UI meta-emotion approach tend to passively reject their children's negative emotions (Paterson et al., 2012).

The types of meta-emotion approaches that parents adopt appear to be influential to the development of their children. For instance, research has indicated that parents who exhibit an emotion coaching meta-emotion approach are more likely to raise

school-aged children who have the necessary abilities to regulate their emotions and display fewer behavioral issues, due to the integration of scaffolding and positive guidance methods these adults provide (Katz et al., 2012). It has also been established that parents whose school-aged children are able to self-regulate their own emotions may in turn find it easier to adopt an emotion coaching meta-emotion approach when they themselves are parents, as compared to school-aged children who have a more difficult time with regulating their emotions (Katz et al., 2012).

Confirmatory findings were provided by Wilson et al. (2012).Wilson investigated the role of emotion coaching and how it may promote preschoolers' emotion socialization practices. The researchers examined the effectiveness of a parenting program labeled "Tuning in to Kids," whose aim was to teach parents skills associated with the approach of emotion coaching. A total of 128 parents of children between the ages of 4 and 5 years completed both questionnaires before and after the intervention program. Teachers of the preschool children also filled out questionnaires regarding the preschoolers' social behaviors. Results indicated that children whose parents completed the parenting intervention program were more likely to have a reduction in the amount of behavior problems exhibited. This study underscored the significance of meta-emotion approaches parents use and how they may impact children's development or outward expressions of behaviors. When considering the factors that impact parents' meta-emotion approaches, it is important to examine from where these thought processes are derived.

Social Cognition Approach

The social cognition approach addresses the significance of adults' cognitions about parenting, as well as how those may be related to the overall childrearing methods they use (Bandura, 1989; Dollard et al., 1939). Parents' cognitions encompass their attitudes, attributions, beliefs, decision-making abilities, expectations, goals, perceptions, problem-solving abilities, self-perception, and meta-parenting schemas. When considering meta-emotion approaches that parents adopt, cognitive processes behind their reactions to their children's emotions are greatly impacted by these variables.

Cognitive Processes

Adults' cognitive processes are thought to be related to psychological processing of events or behaviors that occur within their environments, while simultaneously representing the events within their minds (Bandura, 2001). At the core of adults' cognitive thoughts is intentionality, or their selection of behaviors to follow within certain situations or plans of action. Another component includes forethought, or forward planning in which adults set goals, while predicting potential consequences of their behaviors or plans. In relation, adults may regulate their behaviors by self-evaluating the events that are transpiring within their lives (Bandura, 2001).

Self-reactiveness was another factor associated with the underpinnings of adults' cognitive processes that focuses on their motivations, goals, morals, and self-regulation (Bandura, 2001). Thus, adults' actions may greatly be influenced by their goals and moral compasses. Relating this to key variables in the study, parents may engage in self-

reactiveness when considering their children's motivations when expressing behaviors. Thus, whether parents decide to guide their children's behaviors or not aligns with the concept of meta-emotion.

Additionally, adults' actions of engaging in self-reflection are another manner in which evaluation of motivations, actions, and cognitive thought processes occurs, which may affect decisions they make about what they witness within their environments. Having a positive sense of self efficacy may also affect adults' decisions. Thus, those who possess high levels of self-efficacy may engage in increased amounts of goal setting and motivation levels (Bandura, 2001). All of these factors may ultimately affect parenting perceptions and behaviors. In turn, these perceptions affect parents' meta-emotion approaches due to active decisions parents make about whether to guide or acknowledge their children's behaviors.

Parenting considerations. The origin of parents' behaviors and how they respond to their children's actions within environmental settings directly relate to the foundations of the social cognition approach (Bandura, 1989). From this perspective, individuals' beliefs, feelings, and perceptions will ultimately affect their behaviors or responses towards their children. Parents create the types of environments children are reared within through their actions and responsiveness to particular behaviors their children exhibit. The social cognitive approach posits that parents tend to function based upon their goals, motivations, and behaviors (Bandura, 1989). In turn, a parent's provision of appropriate guidance and acknowledgement of children's behaviors will

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assist the child when faced with situations that surface in everyday life later (Bandura, 1989). For instance, if parents provide their children with guidance by assisting them with alternative ways to express their emotions verbally rather than physically, children's cognitive capacities will grow and in turn they will learn the mechanisms behind optimal social interactions with others.

Application of the Social Cognition Approach to the Current Study

The social cognition approach was applied to the current study by providing a framework in which to view parents' meta-emotion approaches. Specific cognitive processes take place when parents evaluate their children's behaviors and ponder whether they provide guidance to their children's outward expressions of emotions, whether or not they acknowledge their children's behaviors, or whether they punish them for the types of behaviors or emotions they display (Gottman et al., 1996), and these cognitive processes may be influenced by other variables related to parental characteristics or family structure. Ultimately, the types of meta-emotion approaches adults use when responding to their children's behaviors may be directly related to how adults perceive their children's actions as well as whether parents engage in various types of cognitive processes. The current study investigated this further by assessing whether parental stress, outside support, education levels, child's age, child's gender, and number of children in families may impact parents' perceptions of their children's behaviors, which in turn affect the types of meta-emotion approaches they adopt.

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Meta-Emotion, Stress Levels, and Outside Parental Support

The types of meta-emotion approaches an individual adopts can greatly be affected by stress that an individual experiences. In turn, individuals' perceptions of their environments may affect the time allotted to thinking about parenting and overall meta-emotion approaches they adopt. The factors that affect parents' meta-emotion approaches or belief systems ultimately impact children's reactions to emotions within similar environments (Morris et al., 2007). Similarly, adults' perceptions towards emotions and the expressions of their own emotions provide children with baseline references as to how to understand emotions and ultimately the development of emotional competence. The research presented here described how the key variables of this current study (parental stress, outside parental support, education levels) may impact parents' adoption of meta-emotion approaches. These variables were important to investigate, as they shed further light into parents' meta-emotion approaches, which may impact children's processing and understanding of emotions as they mature.

Meta-Emotion, Stress, Support, and Education Level

Guajardo, Snyder, and Petersen (2009) illustrated that parenting is directly related to parents' stress levels as well as adults' understandings and perceptions of emotions that children display. For instance, the amount and types of parental stress that adults experience may be related to parents' overreactions to their children's emotional expressions. Similarly, Guajardo et al. (2009) reported that parental stress may affect the degrees to which children internalize or express their emotions. The results from Guarjardo's et al. (2009) study confirmed Hawk and Holden's (2006) findings on meta-

parenting, who reported that parents who engage in problem solving approaches and reflection tend to devote greater attention to their children's emotions and expressions of behaviors.

To illuminate the relationship between meta-emotion approaches and stress, Mitmansgruber, Beck, and Schubler (2008) gathered 134 participants and assessed their stress levels, well-being, and how these factors ultimately impacted their meta-emotion approaches. The researchers found that the types of meta-emotion approaches individuals adopted directly affected the manner in which participants dealt with stressors that surfaced within their environments. Specifically, stressful events within individuals' lives were found to affect the attention put forth towards engaging in meta-emotion approaches. Results also indicated that the process of reflecting about meta-emotion was associated with participants' emotion regulation abilities. These results provided evidence for a relationship between meta-emotion, stress, and emotion regulation, but a clear definition of meta-emotion, by defining each type of meta-emotion was not provided. Therefore, it was not clear how stress may have been at work in each of the meta-emotion types as described by Paterson et al. (2012). However, the results did help provide support for the need to continue to investigate stress as a variable when considering meta-emotion approaches to parenting.

Additional support for the influence of stress on meta emotion in parenting was provided by research conducted by Beer and Moneta (2012), who assessed how individuals' cognitive processes impact their overall stress levels. Beer and Moneta recruited a total of 212 participants who completed questionnaires that assessed their metacognitions, stress levels, and their meta-emotion approaches. Results indicated that

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participants who had positive metacognitive perceptions were more likely to deal with stress more effectively than participants with less knowledge about metacognitive skills. In turn, the types of meta-emotion approaches individuals adopted were directly influenced by stressors within their environments. Beer and Moneta illustrated the concept of meta-emotion, related to coping skills participants displayed, which offers additional support for the need to examine stress as it may relate to meta-emotion approaches.

Further research conducted by Giallo et al. (2015) builds on Beer and Moneta's (2012) study. Giallo et al. assessed that the impact of stress on fathers' parenting abilities. Participants of this longitudinal study included 2,662 fathers and their children. Fathers participated in the study four times, when their children were 3 – 12 months of age, 2 – 3 years of age, 6 – 7 years, and 8 – 9 years of age. Variables measured included stress levels, parenting warmth, hostility, and consistency. The results indicated that stressors caused by employment negatively impacted participants' abilities as fathers by weakening their moods and increasing their irritability and fatigue levels, all of which could influence their meta-emotion approach.

Additionally, Giallo et al.'s (2015) results revealed that the amount of warmth fathers displayed decreased when their children grew older, especially among those who had high stress levels within their lives. Fathers with moderate and increasing stress levels when their children were in their first year of life were thought to have a higher probability of exhibiting anger and frustration when interacting with their offspring. These results were useful for the field, as they further described factors that affect fathers' interactions with their children, and perhaps, their meta-emotion approaches..

Some studies indicate that parenting stress may be mediated by the amount of support the parent perceives from sources outside of the family unit. This outside parental support may be defined as help parents receive from others. Examples of support include assistance with child care responsibilities as well as simply having individuals to turn to when needed. Outside parental support may depend upon each family's unique structures and experiences; however, the levels of outside parental support they receive may in turn impact their perceptions of the stress faced in their daily lives.. This may, in turn, affect the meta-emotion approach a parent selects.

For example, Kaslow and Fiese (2015) investigated outside support and parental stress among mothers with differing education levels. Participants included 5,865 mothers with 10 month old children. Variables measured in the study included maternal parenting stress, maternal education levels, and the amount of support received from others. Results indicated that stress levels were the highest among mothers with low education levels, as compared to mothers who earned high education levels. Interestingly, mothers with higher education levels were more likely to experience high stress levels due to low support received from family and friends than their less educated peers. Additionally, less contact and support provided by grandparents was likely to produce high stress levels among mothers who had both high and low education levels (Kaslow & Fiese, 2015). These results helped illuminate how stress levels may be mediated or moderated by the mother's education level and the amount of outside support she receives from family members.

To further uncover the role of parents' education levels and parenting, Dubow, Boxer, and Huesmann (2009) conducted a longitudinal study that assessed participants'

socioeconomic status, negative family interactions during middle childhood, and children's education levels. The participants included parents and their children who were interviewed when the children were 8, 19, 30, and 48 years of age. The results indicated that the parents' educational levels (when the child was 8 years old) predicted educational and occupational success when the children were 48 years of age. The authors concluded that there was an association between parents' education levels and children's success which were aligned with parenting practices in which the significance of academic achievement and aspirations were highlighted when the children were young (Dubow et al., year). While meta-emotion itself was not a variable under examination in this study, the findings that parental education levels were aligned with parenting practices offered support for examining parent education levels as they relate to meta-emotion approaches in parenting.

Child's Age and Gender

Child's age was identified as a potential covariate after considering research conducted by Gottman et al. (1996), who stated that children's ages have been shown to affect parenting approaches. Specifically, parents who use emotion coaching meta-emotion approaches when their children are 5 years of age have children who are generally more likely to show characteristics of social competence when they are 8 years of age. Social competence directly relates to meta-emotion approaches, since the approaches parents use have been found to influence children's emotion socialization (Wilson et al., 2012). Similarly, Dix, Ruble, Grusec, and Nixon (1986) illustrated that parents may initially assess their children's behaviors, as well as what may have triggered these behaviors;

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however, parents' reactions to their children's behaviors greatly depended upon their children's developmental ages as well as their personalities and how they changed through the course of time (Dix et al., 1986).

Building on the findings of Dix et al. (1986), Williford, Calkins, and Keane (2007) investigated how parental stress changes as their preschool-aged children grow older. A total of 430 preschool-aged children identified as having issues with controlling their behaviors and emotions were included in this sample. Preschool-aged children's expressions of emotions, proneness to anger, and emotion dysregulation were measured. Parents' stress levels were also a variable assessed. Results indicated that parents' stress levels decreased as preschool-aged children grew older and gained abilities to regulate their own emotions more effectively. In regard to gender differences, Williford et al. found that adults who had female preschool-aged children with stable externalizing behaviors were likely to experience a reduction in the amount of parenting stress they experienced. In comparison, parents of male preschool-aged children did not experience such a decline in parenting stress. Williford et al. explained this phenomenon by stating that generally, females are more likely to develop social and emotional skills more quickly than boys, making communication about adopting prosocial behaviors easier with girls. This is important, since parents' emotion socialization of children may be significantly associated with their children's gender, and ultimately, the parents' meta-emotion approaches.

Further investigation into gender variations was conducted by Cunningham, Kliewer, and Garner (2009) who investigated how school-aged children's gender and meta-emotion approaches may be associated. A total of 69 school-aged children and their mothers were included in the sample. The variables measured included gender, meta-emotion approaches, children's internalizing and externalizing behaviors, as well as social skills. Results indicated that in particular, parents' expression of emotional understanding was related to boys' internalizing behaviors and girls' social skills. These results provided support for the idea that meta-emotion approaches exhibited by parents greatly influence school-aged children's emotion regulation abilities. This also provided additional support for Williford et al.'s (2007) findings that children's socialization of emotions varies between genders.

Additional support for looking at gender in relation to meta-emotion is provided by Chaplin, Cole, and Zahn-Waxler (2005). In their longitudinal study, 60 parents' reactions to their children's emotional expressions were examined. The results indicated that fathers focused more on their daughter's submissive emotions, as compared to their sons' during the preschool age. In comparison, fathers were more likely to give more attention to their sons' externalizing behaviors when they entered elementary school. The focus on sons' externalizing behaviors led to the continual display of this as they grew older. The findings of this study are significant, as they highlight how parents socialize their children's behaviors based upon their gender, and offer additional support for the importance of child age to parenting approaches, as well.

Building upon that work, Chaplin and Aladao (2013) assessed gender differences in children's emotional expressions more recently. A total of 21,709 participants were included in this meta-analysis, which was comprised of research studies examining parents and their children between the developmental ages of infancy to middle childhood in regard to whether there were gender variations in emotional expressions . Results indicated that boys were more likely to exhibit externalizing or aggressive behaviors in infancy, toddlerhood, and middle childhood. However, boys were reported to exhibit less externalizing behaviors in adolescence, as compared to girls. This gender difference may be attributed to developmental psychological and social changes that generally occur during adolescence (Chaplin & Aldao, 2013). These findings offer additional support for Kane's (2006) finding that parents may socialize their children's emotions differently, based upon their gender. However, research is needed on how these gender variatons may be related with parents' meta-emotion approaches.

Number of Children

Edwards (2014) investigated the role of the number of children in families, as they related to parents' willingness to seek assistance from others for child rearing practices. Participants in Edwards' (2014) study included 114 mothers and their children, who attended a Head Start Program. Instruments included in the study measured mothers' outside support, stress levels, and a self-expressive measure. Results indicated that mothers with more than two children were more likely to be receptive of outside support provided by others for parent rearing practices, as compared to mothers who had less than two

children. In comparison, mothers who had more than two children were more likely to experience role constraints. While this study did not look at meta-emotion specifically, its findings that number of children were influential in a mother's willingness to accept outside support provide warrant for including it in the current analyses.

Summary

This chapter outlined the history of parenting and literature that emerged with the development of the field. The progression to the meta-emotion was also presented, which blossomed due to decades of parenting research that lead to this concept. Research studies were also outlined, as they relate to the main variables in this study (meta-emotion, stress, outside support, and education levels) as well as the covariates in this study (child's age, child's gender, and number of children in families). A need for this current research study was also established. Finally, the social cognition approach was outlined for the purposes of establishing the theoretical framework.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Method

This chapter outlines participants that were included in the current study,

instruments that measured each variable proposed in the current study, and a procedure of

how the study was conducted.

Participants

Participants included 143 adults of both genders and all ethnicities who were

parents of at least one child who was between the ages of 1 to 18 years. *An a priori* power

analysis was conducted using G*Power version 3.1.9 to determine the minimum sample

size required to find significance with a desired level of power set at .80, an α-level at .05,

and a moderate effect size of .15 (f^2) (Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007). Based on

the analysis, it was determined that a minimum of 98 participants were required to ensure

adequate power for the overall linear regression models. However, 143 participants were

targeted as the ideal number for adequate power, since this number includes individual

predictors representative of the *F*-test family and the *t*-test family in regression analyses.

Table 2 below outlines demographic variables that represent participants'

characteristics. As shown in the table, the majority of the sample was White/Caucasian

(72%). In addition, 90.2% of the sample was identified as mothers.

Table 2

Demographic Information for Continuous Variables

	M	SD	Range
Number of Children in the Family	2	1.09	1 - 6
Child's Age	8.42	5.21	1 - 18

Table 3

Demographic Information for Categorical Variables

	n	*%*
Child's Gender		
Male	70	49.0
Ethnicity		
Black/African American	19	13.3
Hispanic or Latino	16	11.2
American Indian or Alaskan Native		
Asian	3	2.1
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	1	.7
Other	3	2.1
Income		
$0 to $10,000	12	8.4
$10,000 to $20,000	11	7.7
$20,000 to $30,000	11	7.7
$30,000 to $40,000	5	3.5
$40,000 to $50,000	12	8.4
$50,000 to $60,000	15	10.5
$60,000 to $70,000	15	10.5
$70,000 to $80,000	12	8.4
$80,000 to $90,000	10	7.0
$100,000 and up	40	28.0

Education Levels		
Grade School	1	.7
High School or G.E.D.	2	1.4
Vocational, Technical Certification	1	.7
Some College, No Degree	14	9.8
Two-Year College Degree	20	14.0
Bachelor's Degree or Equivalent	25	17.5
One or Two Years of Graduate School	20	14.0
Master's Degree	47	32.9
M.D., Ph.D., or E.D.	13	9.1
Participants' Identification		
Mothers	129	90.2
Fathers	14	9.8

Instruments

Parental Stress Scale (PSS). The Parental Stress Scale contains 18 questions that

measure participants' experiences with parenting as well as the levels of stress they may

experience (Berry & Jones, 1995). Responses were measured on a 5-point Likert scale,

where "1" was synonomous with strongly disagree, "2" with disagree, "3" with undecided,

"4" with agree, and "5" with strongly agree. Items specifically target positive experiences,

such as parents' individual development as well as negative aspects, such as issues related

with resources available to them. An example of a question included: "The major source

of stress in my life is my child(ren)." Another example was: "I feel close to my children."

(Berry & Jones, 1995). See Appendix A.

In terms of reliability of the Parental Stress Scale, Cronbach's alphas were

reported at .88 for the current study. Scoring of the PSS entailed reverse scoring

questions 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 17, and 18 by inverting scores of 1 to 5, scores of 2 to 4, scores

of 4 to 2, and scores of 5 to 1 (Berry & Jones, 1995). After summing the scores, the range of scores that could exist for each completed Parental Stress Scale is between 18 to 90. Higher scores indicate greater levels of stress. Participants' scores ranged between 19 to 70. See Table 3.

Emotion-Related Parenting Styles (ERPS). This questionnaire is a 20-item short form that measures participants' meta-emotion approaches (Paterson et al., 2012). Specific meta-emotion approaches that were identified by using this questionnaire include emotion coaching, parental acceptance of negative emotion, parental rejection of negative emotion, and feelings of uncertainty/ ineffectiveness in emotion socialization in emotion socialization. Cronbach's alphas calculated for each of the meta-emotion subscales are as follows: the emotion coaching (EC) subscale was .74, the parental rejection of negative emotion (PR) subscale was .47, the parental acceptance of negative emotion (PA) was .73, and the uncertainty/ineffectiveness in emotion socialization (UI) was .78.

Participants were asked to answer 20 questions, based upon a Likert scale, where a response of "1" is "always false," and "5" is "always true" (Paterson et al., 2012). An example of a question on the ERPS is: "Children acting sad are usually just trying to get adults to feel sorry for them." See Appendix B.

Scoring of the four meta-emotion approaches were determined by specific questions on the ERPS. Specifically, meta-emotion approaches were identified by summing each individual scale (emotion coaching, parental rejection of negative emotion, parental acceptance of negative emotion, and feelings of uncertainty/ ineffectiveness in emotion socialization). Scores for each subscale ranged between 5 to

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25. A score of 5 equated to low support of the specific meta-emotion approach, while a score of 25 was identified as having a high adoption of the specific meta-emotion approach.

Greater scores gathered from questions 3, 6, 8, 15, and 19 aligned with an emotion coaching (EC) meta-emotion approach. In comparison, a meta-emotion approach of parental rejection of negative emotion (PR) was identified by greater scores reported on questions 1, 4, 10, 11, and 14. Furthermore, the meta-emotion approach of parental acceptance of negative emotion (PA) was classified as such by greater scores on questions 2, 5, 9, 12, and 16. Finally, feelings of uncertainty/ineffectiveness in emotion socialization (UI) was determined by greater scores on questions 7, 13, 17, 18, and 20.

In this current study, participants' scores for the emotion coaching (EC) subscale ranged between 13 to 25; scores for the parental rejection of negative behavior (PR) ranged between 5 to 21; scores for parental acceptance of negative behavior (PA) ranged between 10 to 25; and scores for feelings of uncertainty/ineffectiveness in emotion socialization (UI) ranged between 5 to 25. See Table 3.

The Social Support Questionnaire. The Social Support Questionnaire contains a total of 27 questions that ask participants questions about who they generally can turn to when needing outside support (Sarason et al., 1983). Participants were also asked to indicate the overall levels of satisfaction they have with that person. An example included the following question: "Whom can you really county on to care about you, regardless of what is happening to you?" See Appendix C. Participants then listed the people in their lives they could turn to for support. After completing this step, participants rated how satisfied they were with this person on a 6-point Likert type

scale, ranging from a "6," which is very satisfied, a "5" which is fairly satisfied, "4" which is little satisfied, "3" which is little dissatisfied, "2" which is fairly dissatisfied, and "1" which is very dissatisfied (Sarason et al., 1983). Scores were summed for a total social support score. In this current study, participants' scores for the SSQ ranged between 2.11 to 6.0. See Table 3. In terms of reliability for this instrument, Cronbach's alphas was reported at .96.

Demographic questionnaire. This questionnaire was created by the principal investigator of the current study and gathered information about participants' education levels, child's gender, child's age, and number of children in the family. See Appendix D and Table 3. The demographic questionnaire also asked participants to identify their ethnicity and income level.

Procedure

After permission was gained from the Texas Woman's University Institutional Review Board, the primary researcher solicited participants by dispersing flyers advertising this study in public locations (see Appendix E). For example, flyers were pinned on bulletin boards in retail stores and churches. The flyer was also advertised on Facebook ©. Those interested in participating in this study were asked to type in the URL located on the flyer, which directly launched them to the dissertation survey, on PsychData ©. In addition, solicitation emails were sent to Texas Woman's University students, which described the purpose of this study and also supplied a link to the study on PsychData ©, if anyone was interested in participating (see Appendix F).

After individuals either typed the URL in a web browser, or clicked on the link to the survey on the solicitation email, they first saw the consent form. In order to participate in this study, individuals had to click "continue." The act of clicking "continue" was synonomous with granting their consent to participate in this study. See Appendix G.

Individuals then viewed the survey, which included questions from the Parental Stress Scale, the Emotion-Related Parenting Styles Self-Test, the Social Support Questionnaire, as well as the demographic questionnaire. A total of 232 responses were gathered by the principal investigator in PsychData. Following this step, participants' responses were downloaded into Statistical Package for the Social Sciences © (SPSS) for data analyses.

Data screening. Data screening was conducted in SPSS before analyzing the data. Specifically, the principal investigator checked the data for invalid cases and impossible values. This step included deleting a total of 28 survey responses, since they did not meet the inclusion criteria of child's age (having at least one child between the ages of 1 year to 18 years). Further preliminary analyses included assessing which participants dropped out of the study at 50% and 65% completion. It was determined that 48 participants dropped out after completing 50% of the survey, while 13 participants dropped out after completing 65% of the survey. These 61 participants were also deleted

from the survey data, since they were invalid responses. All of the remaining data was from participants who completed the entire survey.

Ambiguous, unrelated answers were also analyzed, based upon open-ended questions on the Social Support Questionnaire. It was determined that participants' responses did not include ambiguous, unrelated answers. Further data screening analyses indicated that missing data was absent from the data set.

Additional data screening suggested that 25 participants completed the survey too quickly, based upon the two second rule for each question. Also, an association was found between those who completed the survey too quickly and those who dropped out at 50% and 65%. In turn, these participants were deleted, since they did not complete the entire survey. After concluding these data screening methods, a total of 143 participants were identified as the final sample.

Summary

The primary researcher gathered participants by dispersing flyers advertising the study in public places. Participants were also solicited by Facebook and emails, advertising this study. The Parental Stress Scale (Berry & Jones, 1995), the Emotion-Related Parenting Styles (Paterson et al., 2012), the Social Support Questionnaire (Sarason et al., 1983), and a demographics questionnaire were placed on PsychData© for participants to complete. A total of 232 responses were gathered on PsychData©, before data screening took place in SPSS©. After performing the data screening steps, a total of 143 participants were identified as the final sample size.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The current study evaluated parental stress, outside parental support, education

levels, child's age, child's gender, as well as the number of children in the family and

how these variables may be associated with parents' meta-emotion approaches.

Quantitative research methods were used to analyze the data and discover the

relationships between these variables. Findings from preliminary analyses and primary

analyses are presented below. All statistical analyses were conducted on SPSS Version

19 statistical software.

Preliminary Analyses

Preliminary analyses included analyzing descriptive statistics and potential

covariates. These methods are described in greater detail below.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 4 presents descriptive statistics for the main variables in this study.

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics

	n	Range	*M*
Emotion Coaching	143	13.00 - 25.00	21.20
Parental Rejection of Negative Emotion	143	5.00 – 21.00	11.69
Parental Acceptance of Negative Emotion	143	10.00 – 25.00	18.50
Feelings of Uncertainty/Ineffectiveness in Emotion Socialization	143	5.00 – 25.00	11.78
Parental Stress (PSS)	143	19.00 - 70.00	38.74
Outside Support (SSQ)	143	2.11 - 6.00	5.47
Education	143	1.00 - 9.00	6.62

Note. Education levels, $M = 6.62$, $SD = 1.70$ is associated with participants who earned at least a Bachelor's degree or equivalent. See Appendix D.

Relationship Between Primary Variables

To test the relationship between the primary variables (meta-emotion approaches, parental stress, outside support, and education), Pearson correlations were performed. Results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Correlations of Primary Variables

_____

Variable	EC	PR	PA	UI	PSS	SSQ	Education
Emotion Coaching	---	-.02	.10	-.20*	-.28**	.15	-.03
Parental Rejection of Negative Emotion	-.02	---	-.08	.43**	.27**	-.02	-.11
Parental Acceptance of Negative Emotion	.10	-.08	---	-.01	.18*	-.08	.16*
Feelings of Uncertainty/ Ineffectiveness in Emotion Socialization	-.20*	.43**	-.01	---	.57**	-.14	.09
PSS (Stress)	-.28**	.27**	.18*	.57**	---	-.32**	.05
SSQ (Outside Support)	.15	-.02	-.08	-.14	-.32**	---	-.03
Education	-.03	-.11	.16*	.09	.05	-.03	---

Note. $* p < .05, ** p < .01$

Analysis of Potential Covariates

A Canonical Correlation analysis was used to explore the relationships between the potential covariates (child's age, child's gender, and the number of children in the family) and each meta-emotion category (EC, PR, PA, and UI). As shown in Table 6, none of the covariates were significant, $p > .05$. Therefore, they were not included in the primary analyses.

Table 6

Canonical Correlation

Dimension	Correlation	F	df 1	df 2	p
1	.26	.92	12	360	.530
2	.08	.20	6	274	.978
3	.04	.11	2	138	.893

Primary Analyses

This section presents the primary findings of this study, which answers the two research questions. The statistical analyses and results are presented below.

Statistical Analyses

To analyze research question one, linear regression was used. The predictors included parental stress (PSS), outside support (SSQ), and education. The dependent variable was each meta-emotion category (EC, PR, PA, and UI). See Tables 7 - 10.

The predictor entered into the linear regression model to answer research question two was the interaction between parental stress and outside support (PSS x SSQ), while the dependent variable included each meta-emotion category (EC, PR, PA, and UI). See Tables 7 - 10.

Emotion coaching. When using the emotion coaching (EC) meta-emotion approach as the dependent variable to answer research questions one and two, the following results were found. Specifically, the overall model was significant $F (3, 138) =$ 4.74, $p = .004$, $R^2 = .093$, adj $R^2 = .074$. Of the predictor variables, only stress was significant, $\beta = -.255$ $(SE = .023)$, $t (141) = -2.99$, $p = .003$. Higher stress levels is associated with lower emotion coaching. See Table 7.

Also, the interaction between outside support and parental stress (SSQ x PSS), was not significant, $\beta = -.023$ $(SE = .031)$, $t (141) = -.269$, $p = .788$. See Table 6.

Table 7

Predicting the Emotion Coaching (EC) Meta-Emotion Approach from Parental Stress, Outside Support, and Education Levels with Interaction

| Predictor | Unstandardized | | Standardized | | |
	b	*SE*	B	*t*	*p*
SSQ (Outside Support)	.381	.310	.105	1.229	.221
PSS (Stress)	-.068	.023	-.255	-2.991	.003
Education	-.023	.125	-.015	-.187	.852
SSQ x PSS	-.008	.031	-.023	-.269	.788

Parental rejection of negative emotion. When using the parental rejection of

negative emotion (PR) meta-emotion as the dependent variable to answer research

question one and two, the following results were found. Specifically, the overall model

was significant F (3, 138) = 4.80, p = .003, R^2 = .095, adj R^2 = .075. Of the predictor

variables, only stress was significant, β = .298, (SE = .023), t (141) = 3.496, p = .001.

Thus, an increase in stress was associated with a higher use of the PR meta-emotion

approach. See Table 8.

Also, the interaction between outside support and parental stress (SSQ x PSS),

was not significant, β = .075 (SE = .031), t (141) = .895, p = .372. See Table 7.

Table 8

Predicting the Parental Rejection of Negative Emotion (PR) Meta-Emotion Approach

from Parental Stress, Outside Support, and Education Levels with Interaction

	Unstandardized		Standardized		
Predictor	b	SE	β	t	p
SSQ (Outside Support)	.232	.320	.062	.725	.470
PSS (Stress)	.082	.023	.298	3.496	.001
Education	-.207	.129	-.131	-1.607	.110
SSQ x PSS	.028	.031	.075	.895	.372

Parental acceptance of negative emotion. When using the parental acceptance of negative emotion (PA) meta-emotion as the dependent variable to answer research questions one and two, the following results were found. Specifically, the overall model was significant F (3, 138) = 3.098, $p = .029$, $R^2 = .063$, adj $R^2 = .043$. Of the predictor variables, none were significant, $p > .05$. See Table 9.

Also, the interaction between outside support and parental stress (SSQ x PSS), was not significant, $\beta = .010$ ($SE = .039$), t (141) = .122, $p = .903$. See Table 8.

Table 9

Predicting the Parental Acceptance of Negative Emotion (PA) Meta-Emotion Approach from Parental Stress, Outside Support, and Education Levels with Interaction

Predictor	Unstandardized		Standardized		
	b	*SE*	β	*t*	*p*
SSQ (Outside Support)	-.233	.396	-.051	-.588	.558
PSS (Stress)	.056	.029	.167	1.929	.056
Education	.294	.159	.153	1.849	.067
SSQ x PSS	.005	.039	.010	.122	.903

Feelings of uncertainty/ineffectiveness in emotion socialization. When using the feelings of uncertainty/ineffectiveness in emotion socialization (UI) meta-emotion as the dependent variable to answer research questions one and two, the following results

were found. Specifically, the overall model was significant $F(3, 138) = 22.551$, $p = .000$,

$R^2 = .329$, adj $R^2 = .314$. Of the predictor variables, only stress was significant, $\beta = .579$,

($SE = .026$), $t(141) = 7.895$, $p = .000$. Thus, an increase in stress was associated with a

higher use of the UI meta-emotion approach. See Table 10.

Also, the interaction between outside support and parental stress (SSQ x PSS),

was not significant, $\beta = .069$ ($SE = .035$), $t(141) = .954$, $p = .342$. See Table 9.

Table 10

Predicting the Feelings of Uncertainty/Ineffectiveness in Emotion

Socialization (UI) Meta-Emotion Approach from Parental Stress, Outside Support, and

Education Levels with Interaction

	Unstandardized		Standardized		
Predictor	b	SE	β	t	p
SSQ (Outside Support)	.229	.356	.047	.645	.520
PSS (Stress)	.205	.026	.579	7.895	.000
Education	.127	.143	.062	.891	.374
SSQ x PSS	.033	.035	.069	.954	.342

Summary

This chapter presented results of the current study. Linear regression analyses

were used to answer each research question. Significant findings included an association

between high levels of parental stress and the use of parental rejection of negative

emotion (PR) and feelings of uncertainty/ineffectiveness in emotion socialization (UI)

meta-emotion approaches. Also, low levels of parental stress were significantly related to

parents' use of the emotion coaching (EC) meta-emotion approach.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

This study investigated parental stress, outside parental support, and education

levels and how they may be associated with meta-emotion approaches adopted by

parents. Previous chapters outlined the rationale of this study, review of literature,

research methodology, and statistical analyses. This chapter will discuss findings,

implications, limitations, and recommendations for future research.

Parental Stress, Outside Parental Support, Education, and Meta-Emotion

The first research question investigated the association between parental stress,

outside parental support, and education levels on each meta-emotion approach. A

discussion about the results will be presented in the subsequent sections.

Parental Stress

When considering the variable of parental stress and its association with the

meta-emotion approaches, low parental stress was found to be significantly related to

parents' use of the emotion coaching meta-emotion approach. In comparison, high stress

levels were significantly associated with parents who adopted the parental rejection of

negative emotion and feelings of uncertainty/ineffectiveness in emotion socialization

meta-emotion approaches.

These findings align with Beer and Moneta (2012) as well as Mitmansgruber et al.

(2008), who stated that parental stress is associated with parents' perceptions about

parenting and decisions made about parenting. In addition, the findings in this study relate with Crnic, Gaze, and Hoffman (2005), who found an association between parents' stress levels and how it influenced adults' parenting approaches.

When parents have low parental stress levels, additional evaluation about children's behaviors as well as parents' reactions to their children's emotions may occur. The acknowledgement and guidance devoted towards assisting children with different ways to express their negative emotions are the foundation of the emotion coaching meta-emotion approach (Paterson et al., 2012). In comparison, high parental stress levels may relate with a lower probability of parents engaging in reflection about their children's emotions and how to guide them if they are negative. As Paterson et al. (2012) described, the meta-emotion approaches of parental rejection of negative emotion and feelings of uncertainty/ineffectiveness in emotion socialization are associated with low levels of guidance that parents give towards their children's emotions as well as little encouragement of their children's expressions of emotions.

Outside parental support and education. The other variables (outside parental support and education levels) were not significantly associated with any of the meta-emotion approaches. This finding was opposite of research conducted by Cooper, McLanahan, Meadows, and Brooks-Gunn (2009), who reported that mothers with high education levels and outside parental support from spouses are likely to experience a reduction of parental stress; thereby affecting meta-emotion approaches adopted by them. Perhaps the disparity in the results found in this study, compared to findings reported by

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Cooper et al. (2009) relate to the lack of diversity in the current sample in terms of education level. This sample had a high number of participants with college and graduate level degrees. Additionally, there might have also been a lack of diversity in marital status (which was not measured), which also might explain why outside support was not significantly associated with a meta-emotion approach for this sample.

Interaction of Parental Stress and Outside Parental Support

The second research question analyzed the interaction between parental stress and outside parental support when predicting the types of meta-emotion approaches that parents use. Non-significant results for this interaction were found for each meta-emotion approach. This result was not expected, since parental stress and outside parental support have been found to have a reciprocal relationship, where high stress levels may be mediated by support adults receive (DeLongis & Holtzman, 2005; Hassall, Rose, & McDonald, 2005). However, other literature has explained the phenomenon between these variables by stating that the amount of support individuals receive may vary through the course of time (Deater-Deckard, 2004). Due to this instability of support parents have, parental support may reduce stress levels at times, but not during all instances. It may be that at the time when participants completed the outside support questionnaire for this study, they were experiencing high levels of support. In addition, Cooper et al. (2009) noted the link between high education levels, outside parental support from spouses, and lower levels of parental stress. This study did not measure the

marital status the parents, which makes it difficult to determine if spousal support had an impact on the amount of outside support parents received or reported.

Child's Age, Child's Gender, and Number of Children

After performing preliminary analyses, the variables of child's age, child's gender, and number of children in the family were not shown to be significant predictors that were associated with parents' meta-emotion approaches. Possible explanations for the non-significant results will be presented in subsequent paragraphs.

Explanations for why child's age was not significant may be explained by the fact that on average, participants' children were 8 years of age. According to Burket et al. (2008), parents are more likely to provide guidance to their children's behaviors when they are preschool-aged. Therefore, the probability of parents engaging in an emotion coaching meta-emotion approach by reflecting and evaluating their children's behaviors may have been reduced.

Non-significant results for child's gender were also not expected based on research conducted by Biblarz and Stacey (2010) and Raley and Binachi (2006), who indicated that parent's reactions to their children's behaviors are directly associated with their child's gender. Furthermore, Chaplin et al. (2005), indicated that fathers are likely to focus on girls' submissive behaviors and boys' externalizing behaviors. This difference in focus might affect the meta-emotion approach that parents use. One possible explanation to why this study did not find significance related to child gender might be the low participation level of fathers. Mothers might have answered questions regarding their

meta-emotion approaches differently than fathers would have. Additionally, this sample had a high level of education. Perhaps an increase in education levels reduces traditional gender stereotype ideals that individuals hold (Miyake, Kost-Smith, Finkelstein, Pollock, Cohen, & Ito, 2010). Furthermore, it was noted that a possible limitation of this study might be that parents were asked to select one child and reflect on their parenting while answering the questions in the survey. However, if parents had multiple children with different genders, it might be plausible to assume that they reflected on their parenting more broadly, as opposed to focusing on the target child. If this were the case, then this might also be a further explanation for the lack of significance seen for gender and meta-emotion approaches with this sample.

Non-significant results for the number of children in the family was also an unexpected finding. Previous research indicates that the greater number of children individuals have reduces the probability of parents providing them with support and guidance as they mature (Fingerman, Miller, Birditt, & Zarit, 2009). The average number of children for this sample was two. It might be that in order to see a significant relationship between the number of children and the amount of support and guidance parents provide, the average number of children might need to be greater than two. This aligns with results from Fingerman et al. (2009) and relates to Edwards (2014), who both noted that parents with *more* than two children may require additional assistance from others due to the added amount of responsibility parents have.

Another possible explanation for the disparity found in this study and previous research relates to the demographic characteristics of the sample. Specifically, the majority of participants in this study were Caucasian mothers with high income levels and high education levels. Results in this study may have differed if participants' demographics were more diverse (e.g. such a greater number of participants with various ethnic, income, and education levels). This postulation aligns with Sarsour, Sheridan, Jutte, Nuru-Jeter, Hinshaw, and Boyce (2011), who stated that families' socioeconomic status is significantly related to children's outcomes due to its impact on parenting.

Implications

Findings gathered in this study hold implications for professionals working in the field of child development or early childhood education. For instance, parent educators or family life educators who understand the association between parental stress and meta-emotion approaches may create programs that assist adults with managing their parental stress levels, while educating parents about how they influence their children's social and emotional development. These implications are significant, as the types of meta-emotion approaches used by parents directly affect children's emotion regulation abilities as well as their overall social competence (Wilson et al., 2012).

Recommendations

There are several recommendations to present after conducting the current study. Namely, those working with parents, such as family life educators, parent

educators, or professionals within early childhood education centers should be aware of the role of parental stress and how it may negatively affect meta-emotion approaches that parents adopt. In turn, these professionals may better understand children's emotions and behavioral expressions as well (Cunningham et al., 2009; Hakim-Larson et al., 2006). Another recommendation includes disseminating more information to parents, professionals working with children, and students within academia about meta-emotion. Since the field of meta-emotion is fairly novel, its importance of how it is related to children's social and emotional development may not be known when looking at the bi-directionality of parent-child relationships.

<div align="center">**Limitations**</div>

There were three primary limitations in this current study. The first limitation included the diversity of the participants. Specifically, the sample consisted of primarily Caucasian participants. Even though approximately 28% of the respondents came from more diversified ethnic backgrounds, it would have been beneficial to gather more participants from this population. Also, the sample gathered in this current study was primarily mothers who earned college and graduate degrees. It would be beneficial to gather more fathers and those who have not earned college degrees in order to investigate how meta-emotion approaches may differ in these populations.

Secondly, when running preliminary statistical analyses, the reliability of the parental rejection of negative emotion subscale was low, which was unanticipated since the measure has been shown to be reliable (Paterson et al., 2012). The low reliability for

this study may be explained by differences in demographics of the sample, such as high education levels, high income and a mostly female population.

Another explanation may be that parents were less comfortable responding to questions that measured parental rejection of negative emotion, as they may have perceived them to not be socially acceptable behaviors.

Finally, the demographic questionnaire specifically asked parents about a particular child, and asked them to report gender and age. However, when answering questions in regards to parenting practices, parents may have answered broadly, thinking about multiple children they had, as opposed to practices pertaining to the target child. As a result, differences may have been found for the variables of child's age and gender in terms of how they may be associated with meta-emotion approaches parents adopt. Future research should address this by assessing each child's age and gender for the purposes of filling in gaps in the literature.

Recommendations for Future Research

Recommendations for future research on meta-emotion includes gathering participants from more varied backgrounds. Examples of such backgrounds include single and dual families, parents with high and low income and education levels, and participants representing more ethnic diversity. Future research is also needed on fathers and factors that influence their meta-emotion approaches. Finally, it is recommended that future research examines the parental rejection of negative emotion, parental acceptance of negative emotion, and feelings of uncertainty/ ineffectiveness in

emotion socialization meta-emotion approaches in terms of how they may impact child outcomes.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this research is important for further understanding the role of variables that are associated with meta-emotion approaches parents adopt. This is essential, as meta-emotion approaches are directly related with children's social and emotional outcomes (Wilson et al., 2012). In relation, children's emotion regulation abilities are directly associated with their executive functions, which are also responsible for memory and cognitive processes (Graziano et al., 2007).

As the study found, parental stress is a significant factor that affects parents' meta-emotion approaches. Specifically, low parental stress was associated with parents' use of the emotion coaching (EC) meta-emotion approach, while high parental stress levels were related with parents adopting the parental rejection of negative emotion (PR) and feelings of uncertainty/ineffectiveness in emotion socialization (UI) meta-emotion approaches. With that in mind, it may be beneficial for professionals working in the field of early childhood to create strategies that may assist with decreasing adults' parental stress levels. Stress reduction could change parenting behaviors and possibly outcomes in their children's social and emotional development. Educating parents, professionals working with children, and students about meta-emotion approaches and how they are associated with children's social and emotional development may also be beneficial for the purposes of providing them with information about its overall significance.

Summary

This chapter outlined results of the current study, implications, limitations, and recommendations for future research. As results have been revealed, parental stress is a variable that is directly associated with the types of meta-emotion approaches parents adopt. Implications and recommendations were presented for those associated with the fields of child development and early childhood education.

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APPENDIX A

Parental Stress Scale

Parental Stress Scale

Berry & Jones (1995)

Instructions: The following statements describe feelings and perceptions about the experience of being a parent. Think of each of the items in terms of how your relationship with your child or children typically is. Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following items by placing the appropriate number in the space provided.

1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Undecided 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree

_____ 1. I am happy in my role as a parent.

_____ 2. There is little or nothing I wouldn't do for my child(ren) if it was necessary.

_____ 3. Caring for my child(ren) sometimes takes more time and energy than I have to give.

_____ 4. I sometimes worry whether I am doing enough for my child(ren).

_____ 5. I feel close to my child(ren).

_____ 6. I enjoy spending time with my child(ren).

_____ 7. My child(ren) is an important source of affection for me.

_____ 8. Having child(ren) gives me a more certain and optimistic view for the future.

_____ 9. The major source of stress in my life is my child(ren).

_____ 10. Having child(ren) leaves little time and flexibility in my life.

_____ 11. Having child(ren) has been a financial burden.

_____ 12. It is difficult to balance different responsibilities because of my child(ren).

_____ 13. The behavior of my child(ren) is often embarrassing or stressful to me.

_____ 14. If I had it to do over again, I might decide not to have child(ren).

_____ 15. I feel overwhelmed by the responsibility of being a parent.

____ 16. Having child(ren) has meant having too few choices and too little control over my life.

____ 17. I am satisfied as a parent.

____ 18. I find my child(ren) enjoyable.

APPENDIX B

Emotion-Related Parenting Styles (ERPS)

Emotion-Related Parenting Styles (ERPS)

Paterson et al. (2012)

<u>Instructions</u>: This questionnaire asks questions about your feelings regarding sadness, fear, and anger both in yourself and in your children. For each item, please indicate the choice that best fits how you feel. If you are not sure, go with the answer that seems the closest.

1. Children acting sad are usually just trying to get adults to feel sorry for them.

   1   2   3   4   5

   Always   Always
   False   True

2. I want my child to experience anger.

   1   2   3   4   5

   Always   Always
   False   True

3. When my child is sad, we sit down and talk over the sadness.

   1   2   3   4   5

   Always   Always
   False   True

4. Children often act sad to get their way.

   1   2   3   4   5

   Always   Always
   False   True

5. I want my child to experience sadness.

1   2   3   4   5

Always   Always
False   True

6. It's important to help the child find out what caused the child's anger.

1   2   3   4   5

Always   Always
False   True

7. When my child is angry, I'm not quite sure what he or she wants me to do.

1   2   3   4   5

Always   Always
False   True

8. When my child is sad, I try to help the child explore what is making him or her sad.

1   2   3   4   5

Always   Always
False   True

9. Children have a right to feel angry.

1   2   3   4   5

Always   Always
False   True

10. I don't mind dealing with a child's sadness, so long as it doesn't last too long.

1	2	3	4	5
Always False				Always True

11. When my child gets sad, I warn him or her about not developing a bad character.

1	2	3	4	5
Always False				Always True

12. A child's anger is important.

1	2	3	4	5
Always False				Always True

13. When my child gets angry, I think, "If only he or she could just learn to roll with the punches."

1	2	3	4	5
Always False				Always True

14. When my child gets angry, my goal is to get him or her to stop.

1	2	3	4	5
Always False				Always True

15. When my child is sad, I try to help him or her figure out why the feeling is there.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Always
False

Always
True

16. I think it's good for kids to feel angry sometimes.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Always
False

Always
True

17. When my child is sad, I'm not quite sure what he or she wants me to do.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Always
False

Always
True

18. When my child gets angry with me, I think, "I don't want to hear this."

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Always
False

Always
True

19. When my child is angry, its time to solve a problem.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Always
False

Always
True

20. When my child gets angry, I think, "Why can't he or she accept things as they are."

1   2   3   4   5

Always   Always
False   True

APPENDIX C

Social Outside Support Questionnaire

Social Outside Support Questionnaire

Sarason et al. (1983)

Instructions: The following questions ask about people in your environment who provide you with help or outside support. Each question has two parts. For the first part, list all the people you know, excluding yourself, whom you can count on for help or outside support in the manner described. Give the person's initials and their relationship to you (see example). Do not list more than one person next to each of the letters beneath the question.

For the second part, indicate how satisfied you are with the overall outside support you have.

If you have no outside support for a question, check the words "No one," but still rate your level of satisfaction. Do not list more than nine persons per question.

Please answer all questions as best you can. All your responses will be kept confidential.

Example:

Who do you know whom you can trust with information that could get you in trouble?

No one   1.) T.N. (brother)   4.) T.N. (father)   7.)

          2.) L.M. (friend)   5.) L.M. (employer)   8.)

          3.) R.S. (friend)   6.)   9.)

How satisfied?

6- very satisfied	5- fairly satisfied	4- a little satisfied	3- a little dissatisfied	2- fairly dissatisfied	1- very dissatisfied

1. Whom can you really count on to listen to you when you need to talk?

No one   1.)   4.)   7.)

          2.)   5.)   8.)

          3.)   6.)   9.)

100

How satisfied?

6- very   5- fairly   4- a little   3- a little   2- fairly   1- very

satisfied   satisfied   satisfied   dissatisfied   dissatisfied   dissatisfied

2. Whom can you really count on to help you if a person whom you thought was a good friend insulted you and told you that he/she didn't want to see you again?

No one   1.)   4.)   7.)
          2.)   5.)   8.)
          3.)   6.)   9.)
How satisfied?

6- very   5- fairly   4- a little   3- a little   2- fairly   1- very
satisfied   satisfied   satisfied   dissatisfied   dissatisfied
dissatisfied

3. Whose lives do you feel that you are an important part of?

No one   1.)   4.)   7.)
          2.)   5.)   8.)
          3.)   6.)   9.)
How satisfied?

6- very   5- fairly   4- a little   3- a little   2- fairly   1- very
satisfied   satisfied   satisfied   dissatisfied   dissatisfied
dissatisfied

4. Whom do you feel would help you if you were married and had just separated from your spouse?

No one   1.)   4.)   7.)
          2.)   5.)   8.)
          3.)   6.)   9.)

How satisfied?

6- very satisfied	5- fairly satisfied	4- a little satisfied	3- a little dissatisfied	2- fairly dissatisfied	1- very dissatisfied

5. Whom could you really count on to help you out in a crisis situation, even though they would have to go out of their way to do so?

No one   1.)   4.)   7.)
          2.)   5.)   8.)
          3.)   6.)   9.)
How satisfied?

6- very satisfied	5- fairly satisfied	4- a little satisfied	3- a little dissatisfied	2- fairly dissatisfied	1- very dissatisfied

6. Whom can you talk with frankly, without having to watch what you say?

No one   1.)   4.)   7.)
          2.)   5.)   8.)
          3.)   6.)   9.)
How satisfied?

6- very satisfied	5- fairly satisfied	4- a little satisfied	3- a little dissatisfied	2- fairly dissatisfied	1- very dissatisfied

7. Who helps you feel that you truly have something positive to contribute to others?

No one   1.)   4.)   7.)
          2.)   5.)   8.)
          3.)   6.)   9.)
How satisfied?

6- very	5- fairly	4- a little	3- a little	2- fairly	1- very

| satisfied | satisfied | satisfied | dissatisfied | dissatisfied |
dissatisfied

8. Whom can you really count on to distract you from your worries when you feel under stress?

No one   1.)   4.)   7.)
           2.)   5.)   8.)
           3.)   6.)   9.)

How satisfied?

| 6- very | 5- fairly | 4- a little | 3- a little | 2- fairly | 1- very |
| satisfied | satisfied | satisfied | dissatisfied | dissatisfied | |
dissatisfied

9. Whom can you really count on to be dependable when you need help?

No one   1.)   4.)   7.)
           2.)   5.)   8.)
           3.)   6.)   9.)

How satisfied?

| 6- very | 5- fairly | 4- a little | 3- a little | 2- fairly | 1- very |
| satisfied | satisfied | satisfied | dissatisfied | dissatisfied | |
dissatisfied

10. Whom could you really count on to help out if you had just been fired from your job or expelled from school?

No one   1.)   4.)   7.)
           2.)   5.)   8.)
           3.)   6.)   9.)

How satisfied?

| 6- very | 5- fairly | 4- a little | 3- a little | 2- fairly | 1- very |
| satisfied | satisfied | satisfied | dissatisfied | dissatisfied | |
dissatisfied

11. With whom can you totally be yourself?

No one   1.)   4.)   7.)
            2.)   5.)   8.)
            3.)   6.)   9.)

How satisfied?

| 6- very satisfied dissatisfied | 5- fairly satisfied | 4- a little satisfied | 3- a little dissatisfied | 2- fairly dissatisfied | 1- very |

12. Whom do you feel really appreciates you as a person?

No one   1.)   4.)   7.)
            2.)   5.)   8.)
            3.)   6.)   9.)

How satisfied?

| 6- very satisfied dissatisfied | 5- fairly satisfied | 4- a little satisfied | 3- a little dissatisfied | 2- fairly dissatisfied | 1- very |

13. Whom can you really count on to give you useful suggestions that help you to avoid making mistakes?

No one   1.)   4.)   7.)
            2.)   5.)   8.)
            3.)   6.)   9.)

How satisfied?

| 6- very satisfied dissatisfied | 5- fairly satisfied | 4- a little satisfied | 3- a little dissatisfied | 2- fairly dissatisfied | 1- very |

14. Whom can you count on to listen openly and uncritically to your innermost feelings?

No one   1.)   4.)   7.)

           2.)   5.)   8.)

           3.)   6.)   9.)

How satisfied?

6- very satisfied	5- fairly satisfied	4- a little satisfied	3- a little dissatisfied	2- fairly dissatisfied	1- very dissatisfied

15. Who will comfort you when you need it by holding you in their arms?

No one   1.)   4.)   7.)

           2.)   5.)   8.)

           3.)   6.)   9.)

How satisfied?

6- very satisfied	5- fairly satisfied	4- a little satisfied	3- a little dissatisfied	2- fairly dissatisfied	1- very dissatisfied

16. Whom do you feel would help if a good friend of yours had been in a car accident and was hospitalized in serious condition?

No one   1.)   4.)   7.)

           2.)   5.)   8.)

           3.)   6.)   9.)

How satisfied?

6- very satisfied	5- fairly satisfied	4- a little satisfied	3- a little dissatisfied	2- fairly dissatisfied	1- very dissatisfied

17. Whom can you really count on to help you feel more relaxed when you are under pressure or tense?

No one   1.)   4.)   7.)

2.)	5.)	8.)
3.)	6.)	9.)

How satisfied?

6- very satisfied	5- fairly satisfied	4- a little satisfied	3- a little dissatisfied	2- fairly dissatisfied	1- very dissatisfied

18. Whom do you feel would help if a family member very close to you died?

No one	1.)	4.)	7.)
	2.)	5.)	8.)
	3.)	6.)	9.)

How satisfied?

6- very satisfied	5- fairly satisfied	4- a little satisfied	3- a little dissatisfied	2- fairly dissatisfied	1- very dissatisfied

19. Who accepts you totally, including your worst and best points?

No one	1.)	4.)	7.)
	2.)	5.)	8.)
	3.)	6.)	9.)

How satisfied?

6- very satisfied	5- fairly satisfied	4- a little satisfied	3- a little dissatisfied	2- fairly dissatisfied	1- very dissatisfied

20. Whom can you really count on to care about you, regardless of what is happening to you?

No one	1.)	4.)	7.)
	2.)	5.)	8.)
	3.)	6.)	9.)

How satisfied?

| 6- very satisfied dissatisfied | 5- fairly satisfied | 4- a little satisfied | 3- a little dissatisfied | 2- fairly dissatisfied | 1- very |

21. Whom can you really count on to listen to you when you are very angry at someone else?

No one   1.)   4.)   7.)
         2.)   5.)   8.)
         3.)   6.)   9.)
How satisfied?

| 6- very satisfied dissatisfied | 5- fairly satisfied | 4- a little satisfied | 3- a little dissatisfied | 2- fairly dissatisfied | 1- very |

22. Whom can you really count on to tell you, in a thoughtful manner, when you need to improve in some way?

No one   1.)   4.)   7.)
         2.)   5.)   8.)
         3.)   6.)   9.)
How satisfied?

| 6- very satisfied dissatisfied | 5- fairly satisfied | 4- a little satisfied | 3- a little dissatisfied | 2- fairly dissatisfied | 1- very |

23. Whom can you really count on to help you feel better when you are feeling generally down-in-the- dumps?

No one   1.)   4.)   7.)
         2.)   5.)   8.)
         3.)   6.)   9.)
How satisfied?

6- very satisfied dissatisfied	5- fairly satisfied	4- a little satisfied	3- a little dissatisfied	2- fairly dissatisfied	1- very

24. Whom do you feel truly loves you deeply?

No one   1.)   4.)   7.)
          2.)   5.)   8.)
          3.)   6.)   9.)

How satisfied?

6- very satisfied dissatisfied	5- fairly satisfied	4- a little satisfied	3- a little dissatisfied	2- fairly dissatisfied	1- very

25. Whom can you count on to consol you when you are very upset?

No one   1.)   4.)   7.)
          2.)   5.)   8.)
          3.)   6.)   9.)

How satisfied?

6- very satisfied dissatisfied	5- fairly satisfied	4- a little satisfied	3- a little dissatisfied	2- fairly dissatisfied	1- very

26. Whom can you really count on to outside support you in major decisions you make?

No one   1.)   4.)   7.)
          2.)   5.)   8.)
          3.)   6.)   9.)

How satisfied?

6- very satisfied dissatisfied	5- fairly satisfied	4- a little satisfied	3- a little dissatisfied	2- fairly dissatisfied	1- very

27. Whom can you really count on to help you feel better when you are very irritable, ready to get angry at almost anything?

No one   1.)   4.)   7.)
         2.)   5.)   8.)
         3.)   6.)   9.)
How satisfied?

6- very satisfied	5- fairly satisfied	4- a little satisfied	3- a little dissatisfied	2- fairly dissatisfied	1- very dissatisfied

APPENDIX D

Demographic Questionnaire

Demographic Questionnaire

Instructions: Please click on the dot below each question to indicate your response.

1. Are you a: Mother   Father

2. How would you describe your ethnic background or race? (you may select more than one).
    A. White (non-Hispanic)
    B. Black or African American
    C. American Indian, or Alaskan Native
    D. Hispanic or Latino
    E. Asian
    F. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
    G. Other (please describe)_____

3. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
    A. Grade School
    B. High School or G.E.D.
    C. Vocational, technical, or certificate program
    D. Some college work, but no degree
    E. Two-year college degree
    F. Bachelor's degree or equivalent
    G. One or two years of graduate/professional school study, but no degree
    H. Master's degree
    I. M.D., Ph.D., or Ed.D.

4. What is your child's age? _____ years

5. How many children do you have in your family? _____

6. What is your child's gender? Male Female

7. What is your yearly income?

    A. $0 -$10,000
    B. $10,000 -$20,000
    C. $20,000- $30,000

D. $30,000-$40,000

E. $40,000-$50,000

F. $50,000-$60,000

G. $60,000-$70,000

H. $70,000-$80,000

I. $80,000-$90,000

J. $100,000 and up

APPENDIX E

Solicitation Flyer

Solicitation Flyer

You are invited to participate in a research study entitled:

Investigating the Relationships Between Meta-Emotion Approaches, Stress, Outside
Support, and Education Levels

<u>Participants must be</u>: Parents of children who are between the ages of 1 to 18 years

-All completed forms will remain confidential, in accordance to research ethics and
principles.

** If interested in participating in this study, please type this URL into your web browser
to begin: https://www.psychdata.com/auto/surveyedit.asp?UID=92738&SID=170822

** If you have any questions about the study, please contact: **

Hannah Mills Mechler
hmills1@twu.edu

**- Please note, there is a potential risk of loss of confidentiality in all email,
downloading, and internet transactions.**
-Participation is voluntary and that participation may be discontinued at anytime.

APPENDIX F

Solicitation Email

Solicitation Email

Hello,

I am currently working on my dissertation and I invite you to participate in my study titled "Investigating the Relationships Between Meta-Emotion Approaches, Parental Stress, Outside Support, and Education Levels."

Participation includes completion of the following anonymous online questionnaires: the Parental Scale, the Emotion-Related Parenting Styles Self-Test, the Social Outside support Questionnaire, and a demographic questionnaire. It is anticipated that all questionnaires will take a total of approximately 30 to 60 minutes to complete.

Please note that your participation is voluntary and you may discontinue at any time. All questionnaires submitted online are anonymous and responses will be kept confidential, in accordance to research ethics and principles.

If you have any questions, please email me at: hmills1@twu.edu

*Please note there is a possibility of loss of confidentiality in all email.

If you are interested in participating, please click on the following link to begin: https://www.psychdata.com/auto/surveyedit.asp?UID=92738&SID=170822

Thank you for your time and interest in this study!

Sincerely,

Hannah Mills Mechler

APPENDIX G

Consent Form

<div align="center">Consent Form

TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH</div>

Title: Investigating the Relationships Between Meta-Emotion Approaches, Parental Stress, Outside Support, and Education Levels
Primary Investigator: Hannah Mills Mechler, MS, ABD ……….. hmills1@twu.edu
406-XXX-XXXX

Explanation and Purpose of Research

The purpose of this research includes investigating whether stress, outside parental support, and education levels affects the types of meta-emotion approaches adults use towards their children.

Description of Procedures

After permission is gained from the Texas Woman's University Institutional Review Board, the principal researcher will disperse flyers advertising the study. Those who would like to participate will be asked to type in a URL on their own computer browser, which would allow participants to complete the anonymous questionnaires online, through PsychData. After locating the study online, on PsychData, participants will be asked to electronically acknowledge a consent form, which outlines the purpose of the study and potential risks that participants may face if they choose to partake in the research study. Individuals will also be told in the consent form that they may discontinue their participation in the study at anytime.

Once participants have electronically acknowledged the consent form, they will be asked to complete the Parental Stress Scale, the Emotion-Related Parenting Styles Self-Test, the Social Outside support Questionnaire, as well as the demographic questionnaire. After participants finish the anonymous questionnaires, responses will be transferred into a SPSS database, which will include labels of the variables as well as raw data that derived from participants' responses. After gathering the desired number of participants for this current study, the principle researcher will close access to the study online (on PsychData.com) and analyze the data/results.

Potential Risks Participation and Benefits

Confidentiality will be protected to the extent that is allowed by law. However, loss of confidentiality may occur, since this is a potential risk for all research involving human participants. To ensure confidentiality is protected, names will not be asked when participants complete the anonymous questionnaires.

Also, loss of time may coincide to a potential risk. However, participants may discontinue at any time during the duration of the study. Steps to minimize this risk include the fact that participants will be told about the expected duration of the study when they review the consent form. In addition, participants will be told that their involvement is voluntary and they may discontinue at any time during the duration of the study.

Fatigue is another potential risk. Specifically, participants may experience fatigue when completing the surveys. However, they will be told that they can discontinue at any time during the study. Also, completion of surveys is not based upon forced completion. Rather, their participation is voluntary and they may discontinue the study at any time.

 If you click this button to begin the anonymous questionnaires, this constitutes consent to participate in this research study.

Click Here to Begin