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To cite this article: Hidayat Ma'ruf, Ahmad Juhaidi, Muhammad Rafiq Hafiz & Salafuddin Fitri (2025) Uncovering the influence of demographic factors on the emotional regulation of Alpha generation students in Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia: the role of parenting style as a mediator, *Cogent Education*, 12:1, 2511448, DOI: [10.1080/2331186X.2025.2511448](https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2025.2511448)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2025.2511448>



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Published online: 03 Jun 2025.



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Uncovering the influence of demographic factors on the emotional regulation of Alpha generation students in Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia: the role of parenting style as a mediator

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ABSTRACT

Parents face increasing challenges in educating Generation Alpha, yet limited research addresses this issue in Indonesia's Islamic school context. This study investigates the direct effects of parental demographic background—namely, child's gender, number of children, parental age, and education—on students' emotional regulation, and examines the mediating role of parenting style. Data from 201 parents of elementary and junior Islamic school students were analyzed using PLS-SEM. Results show that permissive parenting had a strong positive effect on emotion regulation, while authoritarian and authoritative styles had limited or negative impacts. Child gender was weakly and negatively associated with authoritative parenting. The number of children correlated negatively with emotional regulation but showed low influence on permissive parenting, similar to parental age. Parental education showed strong negative associations with both authoritarian and permissive styles and had the strongest negative effect on authoritarian parenting. In Islamic education contexts, higher-educated parents were less likely to adopt authoritarian styles. The mediating roles of permissive and authoritarian parenting between parental education and emotion regulation were minimal. These findings underscore the importance of culturally contextualized parenting strategies in Islamic schools and call for further research on their long-term and cross-cultural applicability.

PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY

This study provides new empirical evidence on how parenting style mediates the influence of parental demographics on students' emotional regulation, offering practical insights for culturally relevant parenting interventions in Islamic school contexts.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 17 October 2024
Revised 4 March 2025
Accepted 20 May 2025

KEYWORDS

Child emotional development; demographic factors; emotional regulation; Islamic Education; parenting styles



SUBJECTS

Counseling Psychology;
Developmental Psychology;
Educational Psychology

1. Introduction

Children, particularly those in Generation Alpha born after 2010 (Höfrová et al., 2024), need to develop the important skill of emotion regulation as they navigate an increasingly connected and stressful world. Social media and digital technology expose them more frequently, potentially increasing the risk of anxiety, stress and depression (Williams, 2020; Odgers & Jensen, 2020; Rideout et al., 2022). Generation Alpha children are more exposed to digital media than previous generations, which can influence the way they understand and manage emotions (Livingstone & Helsper, 2008; Muppalla et al., 2023).

A study conducted in China has demonstrated that Internet addiction adversely affects children's physical and mental health by significantly reducing their sleep and exercise time (Zhou et al., 2022). Similarly, in Türkiye, excessive internet usage has been associated with an elevated risk of child abuse (Ünverdi & Sarıkaya Karabudak, 2025), a decline in physical activities, poor dietary habits and increased sleep disturbances (Duran & Küçük Alemdar, 2023; Duran & Küçük Alemdar, 2023). In South Korea,

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children whose mothers experience depression have been found to exhibit more severe problematic internet use (Oh et al., 2021; Oh et al., 2021). A study in England found that internet use harms children's well-being, especially girls' body image (McDool et al., 2020). Meanwhile, in Mexico, children primarily utilize the Internet for entertainment and leisure purposes, with limited engagement in educational activities (Martínez-Domínguez and Fierros-González, 2022). These studies, conducted across diverse cultural contexts, underscore the potentially detrimental effects of technology on the emotional well-being of future generations. Parents and children must be capable of overcoming these challenges.

In an ever-changing world, the ability to regulate emotions is essential for children to adapt to new and challenging situations. This includes the ability to remain calm under pressure and deal with failure in a constructive manner. Emotion regulation helps children better cope with these stresses and prevent more serious mental health problems in the future (Van Beveren et al., 2019; Stifter & Augustine, 2019; Delhom et al., 2021; Sanchez-Lopez, 2021). These skills help them understand and respond appropriately to other people's emotions, which is important for building positive relationships and avoiding social conflict.

Parenting style is a crucial factor in helping children develop effective emotional regulation skills. Good parenting can help children understand, express and manage their emotions healthily, which in turn has a positive impact on their psychological and social well-being (Morris et al., 2007; Eisenberg, Cumberland et al., 1998; Eisenberg, 2020; Brumariu, 2015; Zimmer-Gembeck et al., 2017; Thompson, 2019; Goagoses et al., 2023). Previous research shows that responsive and supportive parenting, in which parents provide consistent attention and emotional support, can improve children's ability to regulate their emotions (Castro et al., 1997; Eisenberg, Cumberland et al., 1998; Lin & Faldowski, 2023). On the other hand, authoritarian or permissive parenting tends to hinder the development of emotional regulation skills in children, which can lead to behavioral and emotional problems (Kiff et al., 2011; Uji et al., 2014; Dickson et al., 2019). Furthermore, parenting style can be influenced by various demographic factors such as parental age and parental education (Verhoeven et al., 2007; Cabrera et al., 2014; Castillo et al., 2011; Trifan et al., 2014; El-Deen et al., 2021), child's age (N. Cabrera et al., 2006; Lam et al., 2012; Phares et al., 2009; Roche et al., 2014; Verhoeven et al., 2012), gender of the child (Leaper, 2002; McKinney & Renk, 2008), and number of children (Downey, 1995; Catipay et al., 2023).

Research related to children's emotional regulation has been widely conducted in Western countries context (Sanchis-Sanchis et al., 2020; Vasiou et al., 2023; Goagoses et al., 2023; De Raeymaecker & Dhar, 2022; Lin & Faldowski, 2023). Several studies in Indonesia reveal that factors similar to global research influence children's emotional regulation, but the local cultural context plays a crucial role. Indonesia's collectivist culture and traditional family values greatly influence parenting patterns and the way children manage their emotions (Riany et al., 2017, 2022; Zevalkink & Riksen-Walraven, 2001). Another study conducted in Indonesia has demonstrated that matrilineal parenting practices and family environments exert a significant influence on adult (Natsir et al., 2021). The parenting style of the indigenous Dayak Meratus tribe tends to provide insufficient social and cultural capital support for their children's education (Juhaidi et al., 2024). Although studies in both Western and Indonesian contexts have revealed clear effects of parenting, their impact within Islamic contexts remains underexplored.

This becomes increasingly relevant when applied to Generation Alpha children who attend Islamic educational institutions, which have a different approach from general educational institutions. Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia emphasize character development, spiritual growth and community service, which makes them unique (Safitri et al., 2022; Noor & Syah, 2015; Juhaidi, 2024). Thus, there is a population gap in the study of emotional regulation and parenting styles among students in Islamic educational institutions. In other words, we still lack evidence of demographic factors influencing the emotional regulation of alpha generation students in Islamic educational institutions.

Therefore, more research is required to delve deeper into the dynamics of children's emotional regulation in this context, particularly in relation to the influence of culture and Indonesia's unique Islamic educational approach (Azra, 2018; Isbah, 2020; Subaidi et al., 2023).

The objectives of this research are outlined in the description below:

This research will increase our understanding of the relationship between parenting style and emotional regulation, especially in Generation Alpha children who grow up in a different social and

technological context compared to previous generations. Additionally, it can offer parents useful advice

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- RA1: Exploring the influence of parental age, parental education, child age, child gender and number of children on parenting styles for generation alpha students in Islamic primary school.
- RA2: Exploring the influence of parental age, parental education, child age, child gender, and number of children on the emotional regulation abilities of Generation Alpha students in primary Islamic school.
- RA3: Evaluating the mediating role of parenting style in the relationship between demographic factors (parental age, parental education, child age, child gender and number of children) and emotion regulation of Generation Alpha students in Islamic primary school.
-

on how to choose and implement the most efficient parenting methods to foster the growth of sound emotional control in their kids.

For educators, counsellors, and psychologists, the results of this research can be a reference for designing more effective intervention or training programs in helping children develop emotional regulation skills. This research can provide important empirical data for the government's decision-making in public policy related to the welfare of children and families. For instance, the government could adjust its parent education or early intervention programs based on findings about the parenting styles that most effectively support children's emotional regulation. This not only benefits the well-being of individual children but also the mental health of society as a whole.

Overall, this research has the potential to make significant contributions to a variety of fields, including developmental psychology, education, public policy and social welfare. By understanding in depth how various parenting styles influence the emotional regulation of Generation Alpha children, we can develop more effective strategies and support healthy emotional development for future generations.

2. Literature review

2.1. Alpha generation and its characteristics

Generation Alpha refers to children born after 2010, the first generation to grow up fully in the digital era. From an early age, they have a close relationship with technology, spending most of their lives with digital devices like cellphones, tablets and computers (Ziatdinov & Cilliers, 2021; Höfrová et al., 2024; Jukic & Skojo, 2021). This generation is also known for its high multitasking abilities because they are used to interacting with large amounts of information simultaneously (McCrindle, 2018; Šramová & Pavelka, 2023; Karatayev et al., 2024). Experts predict that Generation Alpha will surpass previous generations in education and global connectivity. Furthermore, an increasingly fast-paced and information-rich world shapes their social behavioral characteristics, leading to a greater inclination toward online communication over in-person interactions. They are also known to be more individualistic, but at the same time, have higher social and environmental awareness than previous generations (Liao, 2024; Holland, 2024; Saykova, 2024).

Generation Alpha relies more on social media and instant messaging applications as their primary means of communication. This impacts the development of different social skills compared to previous generations, who were more comfortable communicating digitally than in person. However, research shows that excessive reliance on technology can also increase the risk of emotional disorders, such as anxiety and stress, especially due to excessive exposure to poorly controlled social media content. (Du et al., 2024; Draženović et al., 2023; Sun et al., 2023; Zsila & Reyes, 2023; Sun, 2023).

The emotional challenges this generation faces include a greater tendency toward loneliness and self-dissatisfaction, resulting from interaction patterns that are more digital than in-person. Additionally, digital emotional development is an important area to understand, where these children must learn to manage online interactions that are often filled with anonymity and rapidly changing emotional impacts. (Laghos, 2023; Taylor et al., 2023; Draženović et al., 2023; Wood et al., 2016; Sun, 2023).

2.2. Parenting style

Parenting style refers to the methods by which parents educate, treat and guide their children. Baumrind (1967) first introduced the concept of parenting style, classifying it into three main types: authoritarian, authoritative and permissive. Later, Maccoby & Martin (1983) expanded this category by adding a fourth style, namely neglectful or non-involved parenting.

The authoritarian parenting style is characterized by strict control and a lack of warm communication between parents and children. Children who grow up in authoritarian environments often experience difficulties in regulating emotions and have lower self-esteem (Grolnick & Pomerantz, 2009; Li et al., 2023a, 2023b; Li, Tang, et al., 2023; Safaria & Ariani, 2024; Liang et al., 2025). Further, the authoritative parenting style is considered to be the most effective. Authoritative parents combine warmth and affection with clear and firm rules while remaining flexible and responsive to the child's needs. Children raised in this style tend to have better emotional regulation and higher academic achievement (Spera, 2005; Sun et al., 2024; Pinquart, 2016; Stavroulaki et al., 2021; Di Pentima et al., 2024). Another parenting style, permissive parenting, is characterized by excessive indulgence and a lack of structure or rules. Children raised in permissive environments often face challenges in regulating themselves, which can lead to impulsive behavior and emotional regulation problems (Kopko, 2007; Amran Shah et al., 2023; Rademacher et al., 2025; Muhliawati & Purwadi, 2023).

Ultimately, the neglectful parenting style involves minimal interaction and attention from parents. Children raised in these nurturing environments often exhibit greater developmental challenges, such as difficulties in emotional regulation, lower academic achievement, as well as an increased risk of antisocial behavior (Steinberg, 2001; Koulenti & Anastassiou-Hadjicharalambous, 2011; Garcia & Serra, 2019; Ma & Song, 2023). Research on neglectful parenting styles is scarce due to its frequent association with broader social issues like poverty and domestic violence, which complicates its isolation as a distinct topic. Furthermore, neglectful parenting tends to be overlooked as a major psychological issue, with most research on parenting styles focusing more on authoritative, authoritarian and permissive parenting because of their clearer psychological impact on child development (Steinberg, 2001; Bywaters & Skinner, 2022; Beasley et al., 2022). We did not use neglectful parenting style as a variable in our study due to this consideration.

Meanwhile, the parenting style in families that send their children to Islamic educational institutions has unique characteristics. Parents in this environment tend to instill strong religious values, which focus not only on academic knowledge but also on developing children's character and spirituality. In this parenting approach, parents have the responsibility to ensure that their children understand the purpose of life from an Islamic perspective, namely living to worship God through various aspects of life, including education and social interaction (Bensaid, 2021; Hamjah et al., 2020; Dwi Utari & Hamid, 2021).

In addition, the Islamic-based parenting approach in several regions in Indonesia shows that local culture and community support also strengthen the application of religious values in parenting. Parents tend to integrate religious education into daily life, both at home and at school (Purwandari et al., 2022; Wijaya & Miyanto, 2022; Abubakar et al., 2023; Kosim et al., 2024; Saimun et al., 2023; Roskam et al., 2023). Further, Riany et al. (2017) underscores the significant role of cultural values in shaping parenting practices within the Indonesian context. Natsir et al. (2021) highlight the profound influence of matrilineal parenting and family environments on adult behavior in West Sumatera. Another study conducted in Indonesia has demonstrated that religious beliefs significantly influence the prevalence of authoritarian parenting practices (Purnama et al., 2022). Authoritarian parenting is associated with bullying behavior as perpetrators, while permissive parenting is linked to bullying behavior as victims (Saleh et al., 2021).

Although research on parenting in Indonesia has been conducted from various perspectives, there remains a notable gap in studies examining parenting within specific demographic contexts and Islamic educational institutions. Specifically, there is a lack of research on parenting styles among the Alpha generation in the context of Islamic education. This includes an understanding of how the number of children within a family influences parenting styles in Islamic settings. Addressing this gap is crucial for a more comprehensive understanding of the interplay between cultural, religious and demographic factors in shaping parenting practices in Indonesia.

2.3. Emotion regulation

Emotion regulation is an essential ability in human life and includes three main aspects: recognizing, controlling and expressing emotions in a healthy and adaptive manner. This ability has a significant impact on children's psychosocial development and contributes to their mental health and social skills. Children who are able to manage their emotions well tend to find it easier to establish positive social

relationships and show better adaptability, both in the educational context at school and in everyday life (Gross, 2002; Kraiss et al., 2020; Kim et al., 2024; Doménech et al., 2024).

Research shows that the parenting style applied by parents greatly affects children's ability to regulate emotions (Goagoses et al., 2023). Parents play a role through three mechanisms: 1) modeling, where children learn from how parents manage their own emotions; 2) parenting practices related to emotions, such as providing support or punishment for emotions shown by children; and 3) the emotional climate of the family, which includes the emotional atmosphere created by the daily interaction of parents and children (Zhu et al., 2024; S. Li, Tang, et al., 2023; Daniel et al., 2020). A supportive, responsive and consistent parenting style tends to help children develop better emotional regulation (Morris et al., 2007; Rolo et al., 2024; Hajal & McNeil, 2023; Lin et al., 2024).

Children's emotional regulation is influenced by the parenting style applied by parents. This parenting style itself is influenced by various demographic factors, such as parental age and parental education (Verhoeven et al., 2007; Cabrera et al., 2014; Castillo et al., 2011; Trifan et al., 2014; El-Deen et al., 2021), childhood age (N. Cabrera et al., 2006; Lam et al., 2012; Phares et al., 2009; Roche et al., 2014; Verhoeven et al., 2012), child sex (Leaper, 2002; McKinney & Renk, 2008) and the number of children (Downey, 1995; Catipay et al., 2023).

These demographic factors not only influence the regulation of emotions through parenting styles as mediators, but can also influence the regulation of emotions directly. In other words, demographic variables not only play a role in shaping parenting patterns, but also directly contribute to children's ability to manage and express their emotions effectively (Demetris & Loucia 2020; De Raeymaecker & Dhar, 2022; Vasiou et al., 2023).

Previous studies have comprehensively explored various factors influencing children's emotional regulation. However, research specifically focusing on students in Islamic schools remains limited. In the Indonesian context, Islamic schools (madrasahs) possess unique characteristics that distinguish them from general schools, necessitating a more in-depth exploration, particularly in relation to emotional.

3. Hypothesis development

This study will verify the hypothesis

- H1:** There is a significant impact of parental age on authoritative parenting style.
- H2:** There is a significant impact of parental age on authoritarian parenting style.
- H3:** There is a significant impact of parental age on permissive parenting style.
- H4:** There is a significant impact of parental age on emotional regulation.
- H5:** There is a significant impact of parental education on authoritative parenting style.
- H6:** There is a significant impact of parental education on authoritarian parenting style.
- H7:** There is a significant impact of parental education on permissive parenting style.
- H8:** There is a significant impact of parental education on emotional regulation.
- H9:** There is a significant impact of number of children on authoritative parenting style.
- H10:** There is a significant impact of number of children on authoritarian parenting style.
- H11:** There is a significant impact of number of children on permissive parenting style.
- H12:** There is a significant impact of number of children on emotional regulation.
- H13:** There is a significant impact of children's age on authoritative parenting style.
- H14:** There is a significant impact of children's age on authoritarian parenting style.
- H15:** There is a significant impact of children's age on permissive parenting style.
- H16:** There is a significant impact of children's age on emotional regulation.

- H17:** There is a significant impact of children's gender on authoritative parenting style.
- H18:** There is a significant impact of children's gender on authoritarian parenting style.
- H19:** There is a significant impact of children's gender on permissive parenting style.
- H20:** There is a significant impact of children's gender on emotional regulation.
- H21:** There is a significant impact of authoritative parenting style on emotional regulation.
- H22:** There is a significant impact of authoritarian parenting style on emotional regulation.
- H23:** There is a significant impact of permissive parenting style on emotional regulation.
- H24:** There is a significant impact of parental age on emotional regulation, with authoritative parenting style as a mediator.
- H25:** There is a significant impact of parental age on emotional regulation, with authoritarian parenting style as a mediator.
- H26:** There is a significant impact of parental age on emotional regulation, with permissive parenting style as a mediator.
- H27:** There is a significant impact of parental education on emotional regulation, with authoritative parenting style as a mediator.
- H28:** There is a significant impact of parental education on emotional regulation, with authoritarian parenting style as a mediator.
- H29:** There is a significant impact of parental education on emotional regulation, with permissive parenting style as a mediator.
- H30:** There is a significant impact of number of children on emotional regulation, with authoritative parenting style as a mediator.
- H31:** There is a significant impact of number of children on emotional regulation, with authoritarian parenting style as a mediator.
- H32:** There is a significant impact of number of children on emotional regulation, with permissive parenting style as a mediator.
- H33:** There is a significant impact of children's age on emotional regulation, with authoritative parenting style as a mediator.
- H34:** There is a significant impact of children's age on emotional regulation, with authoritarian parenting style as a mediator.
- H35:** There is a significant impact of children's age on emotional regulation, with permissive parenting style as a mediator.
- H36:** There is a significant impact of children's gender on emotional regulation, with authoritative parenting style as a mediator.
- H37:** There is a significant impact of children's gender on emotional regulation, with authoritarian parenting style as a mediator.
- H38:** There is a significant impact of children's gender on emotional regulation, with permissive parenting style as a mediator.

4. Method

4.1. Participant

The participants in this research were 201 parents of students at Islamic elementary school (madrasah ibtidiyah) and junior Islamic school (madrasah tsanawiyah) consisting of 63 men and 138 women. The

Table 1. Participant characteristic.

	<i>N</i> = 201	Sharing (%)
Gender		
Female	138	68.66
Male	63	31.34
Age		
Under 30 years	12	5.97
30–40 years	94	46.77
>40–50 years	71	35.32
More than 50 years	24	11.94
Education		
Under high school	30	14.93
High school	42	20.90
Diploma/bachelor	118	58.71
Postgraduate	11	5.47

participant characteristics are displayed in Table 1. The questionnaire was created online and distributed to students' parents with the help of teachers. These participants were parents who were dominant and close to their children. To test the number of samples we used Power Analysis with GPower by standard f^2 0.2, 9 predictors and statistical power 0.85. The minimum sample is 97 participants. Thus, the number of research samples has exceeded the minimum sample size. The results of the power analysis are as follows:

F tests – Linear multiple regression: Fixed model, R^2 deviation from zero

Analysis: A priori: Compute required sample size

Input: Effect size $f^2 = 0.2$

a err prob = 0.05

Power ($1 - \beta$ err prob) = 0.85

Number of predictors = 9

Output: Noncentrality parameter $\lambda = 19.4000000$

Critical $F = 1.9893176$

Numerator df = 9

Denominator df = 87

Total sample size = 97

Actual power = 0.8547082

Sample selection used convenience and snowballing sampling techniques. We use the technique because it is cheaper, faster and can access samples that are difficult to reach (Naderifar et al., 2017; Stratton, 2021). The prepared questionnaire was sent to the students' parents via the parents' WhatsApp group at the madrasah by the teacher. When delivering this questionnaire, the teacher explained that those who responded were parents who were deans and dominant in their child's upbringing. Participants were also asked to share it with their friends. Participants expressed written consent on the questionnaire. To reduce bias in the convenience sampling technique, we distributed the questionnaire at different times and administered it randomly to ensure a diverse representation of respondents. Additionally, we increased the number of participants as much as possible. According to Stratton (2021), distributing questionnaires at different times and increasing the number of participants reduces bias and enhances the generalizability of data obtained through convenience sampling.

4.2. Measurement

The measuring instrument consists of two parts. The first part contains the identity of the participants, and the second part measures the construct. Demographic indicators include parental age, parental education, child age, gender and number of children. Indicators adapted from Buri (1991) measure parenting styles consisting of authoritative, authoritarian and permissive. The measurement of emotion regulation consists of indicators adapted from Gross and John (2003).

Data analysis uses partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM). Before the analysis, we tested reliability, convergent validity and discriminant validity to ensure the data met the outer model requirements.

5. Result

5.1. Reliability, convergent and discriminant validity

To assess construct reliability, we employed outer loadings (OLs), Cronbach's alpha (α) and composite reliability (CR). Additionally, convergent validity is evaluated using the average variance extracted (AVE). According to Hair et al. (2011, 2019), the thresholds for acceptable reliability are OLs, Cronbach's alpha and CR values exceeding 0.7, while convergent validity is demonstrated by an AVE value above 0.5.

The calculation of the outer model indicated that the OLs, Cronbach's alpha and CR values met the established thresholds for reliability ($OL > 0.7$, $\alpha > 0.7$ and $CR > 0.7$). Furthermore, the AVE score confirmed that the construct satisfied the requirements for convergent validity ($AVE > 0.5$). Indicators that did not meet these criteria were removed for further analysis. The results of the outer model analysis are presented in Table 2.

5.2. Discriminant validity

We used the Fornell–Lacker criterion to evaluate the construct's discriminant validity. According to the Fornell–Larcker criterion, a requirement for establishing discriminant validity is that the AVE of each latent construct must be greater than the construct's highest squared correlation with any other latent construct (Hair et al., 2011). The calculation results show that the root AVE construct has a greater relationship than the other constructs. For example, the AVE Authoritative root of 0.765 is greater than the relationship between this construct and emotional regulation (0.302). Thus, all constructs tested in this research meet the requirements for discriminant validity. The results of the Fornell–Larcker criterion assessment are presented in Table 3.

5.3. Model structural

The constructs measured in this research influence academic performance by 37.5% or moderately. The endogenous variable resilience is influenced 22.7% by exogenous variables in this study. This shows that

Table 2. Construct reliability and convergent validity.

	OL	VIF	α	CR	AVE
Age of children	1.000	1.000			
Parental age	1.000	1.000			
Parental education	1.000	1.000			
Gender of children	1.000	1.000			
Number of children	1.000	1.000			
Authoritative*					
Atv3	0.783	1.773	0.829	0.879	0.593
Atv4	0.764	1.651			
Atv5	0.816	1.814			
Atv6	0.776	1.690			
Atv7	0.707	1.535			
Authoritarian*					
Atn2	0.806	1.755	0.808	0.874	0.635
Atn4	0.872	2.166			
Atn5	0.784	1.534			
Atn7	0.717	1.539			
Permissive*					
Pmsv1	0.758	1.305	0.725	0.845	0.646
Pmsv4	0.807	1.517			
Pmsv6	0.844	1.567			
Emotion regulation*					
ER10	0.820	2.317	0.855	0.893	0.582
ER11	0.832	2.188			
ER12	0.719	1.682			
ER13	0.757	1.816			
ER14	0.701	1.688			
ER9	0.740	1.835			

Note.

Outer Loading > 0.7 ; VIF < 3 ; $\alpha > 0.7$; CR > 0.7 ; AVE > 0.5 .

*We removed some indicator numbers due to they did not meet the outer loading requirements.

Table 3. Discriminant validity – Fornell–Lacker criterion.

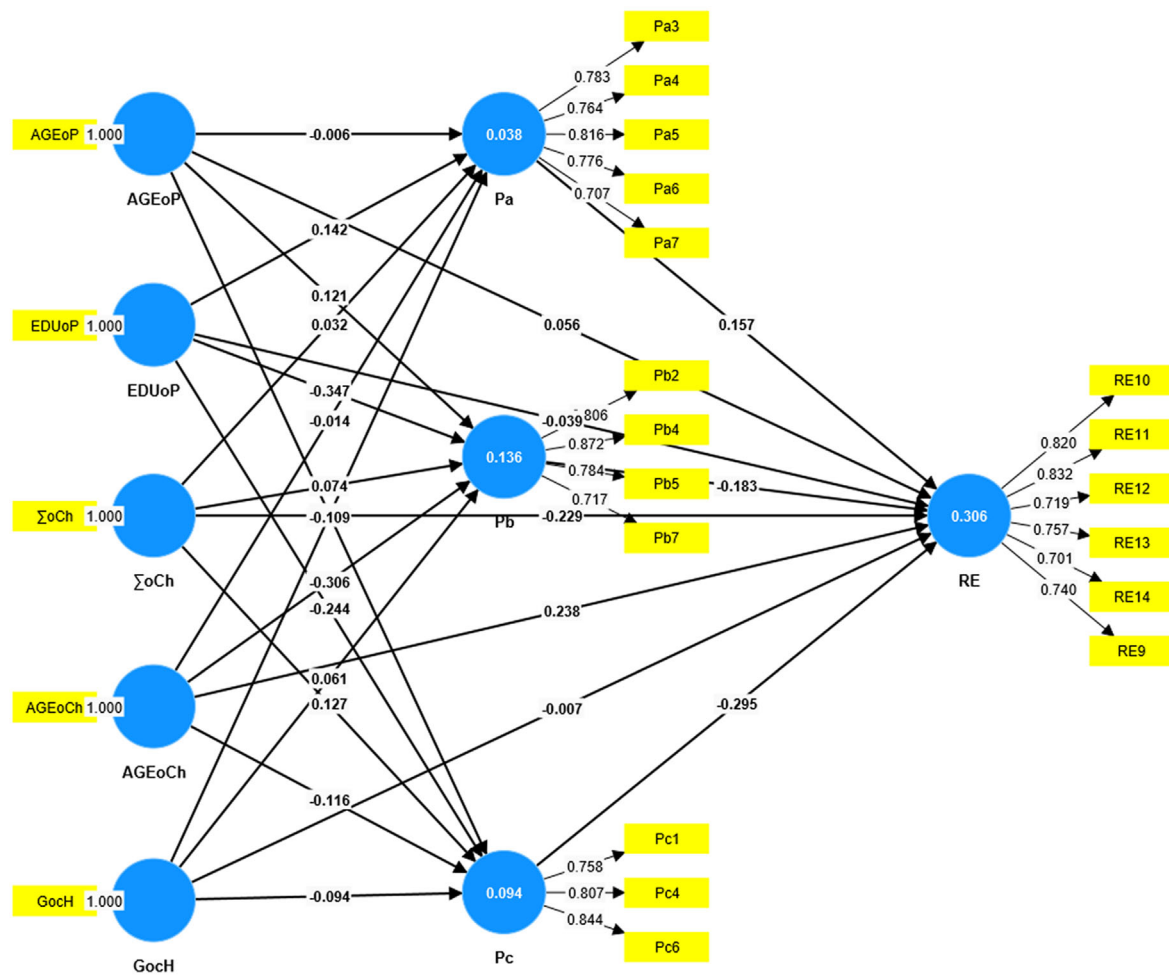
	Age of children	Parental age	Parental education	Gender of children	Authoritative	Authoritarian	Permissive	Emotion regulation	Number of children
Age of children	1.000								
Parental age	0.481	1.000							
Parental education	-0.283	0.017	1.000						
Gender of children	0.018	-0.037	-0.107	1.000					
Authoritative	-0.048	0.006	0.157	-0.126	0.770				
Authoritarian	-0.122	-0.007	-0.268	0.084	-0.366	0.797			
Authoritarian	0.076	0.154	-0.203	-0.083	-0.274	0.279	0.804		
Emotion regulation	0.186	0.040	0.038	0.002	0.283	-0.347	-0.391	0.763	
Number of children	0.363	0.379	-0.039	-0.058	0.025	0.019	0.162	-0.166	1.000

Table 4. Model quality.

	R^2	R^2 adjusted	SRMR	Model quality
Authoritative (Pa)	0.038	0.013	0.059	Very weak
Authoritarian (Pb)	0.136	0.114		Very weak
Permissive (Pc)	0.094	0.071		Very weak
Emotion regulation (RE)	0.306	0.278		Weak

Note. $R^2 < 0.19$ very weak; $0.19 \leq R^2 < 0.33$ weak; $0.33 \leq R^2 < 0.67$ moderate; $R^2 > 0.67$ substantial (Chin, 1998).

Note: AGEop: parental age; Eduop: parental education; Σ oCh: number of children; AGEoCh: children age; GoCh: children gender

**Figure 1.** Structural Model. Note: AGEop = Parental age, Eduop = Parental education, Σ oCh = Number of children, AGEoCh = Children age, GoCh = Children gender.

there are still other exogenous variables that influence and are not measured in this research. Overall, we conclude that the model we offer is fit (SRMR 0.060 < 0.1). The results of the model quality assessment are presented in Table 4 and Figure 1.

5.4. Hypothesis verification

This study employed a bootstrapping procedure to test the hypotheses, utilizing a standard significance threshold of a t -statistic (t) value above 1.96 ($t > 1.96$) and a p value (p) less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$) at a 5% significance level (Hair et al., 2011, 2019). Additionally, the study categorized path coefficients (β) as high if they exceeded 0.3 or at least 0.2 (Chin, 1998). The results, as presented in Table 5, reveal the relationships between exogenous and endogenous variables.

The findings indicate that authoritarian parenting style has a significant but low and negative influence on emotional regulation ($t = 2.159 > 1.96$, $p = 0.015 < 0.05$; $\beta = -0.180 < 0.2$). This suggests that authoritarian parenting negatively impacts a child's emotional regulation, effectively diminishing it. Conversely, authoritative parenting demonstrates a significant positive, albeit low, effect on emotional regulation ($\beta = 0.162$, $t = 2.644 > 1.96$, $p = 0.004 < 0.05$). This implies that a more authoritative parenting style enhances a child's emotional regulation. In contrast, permissive parenting styles exhibit a significant negative and strong influence on emotional regulation ($\beta = -0.290 > 0.2$, $t = 3.764 > 1.96$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$), indicating that permissive parenting adversely affects children's emotional regulation.

The study also found that child gender has a significant but low influence on authoritative parenting styles ($\beta = -0.118 < 0.2$, $t = 1.689$, $p = 0.046$). While this suggests that gender plays a role in the implementation of authoritative parenting, the low β value indicates that the effect is minimal and potentially negligible. On the other hand, gender does not significantly affect emotional regulation ($\beta = -0.007$, $t = 0.116 < 1.96$, $p = 0.454 > 0.05$), implying no notable difference in emotional regulation between males and females.

Furthermore, the number of children in a family has a significant and strong negative effect on emotional regulation ($\beta = -0.227 > 0.2$, $t = 3.861 > 1.96$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$), suggesting that larger family sizes

Table 5. Hypothesis verification result.

	β	T statistics	p Values	Hypothesis
Parental age -> Authoritative	-0.044	0.496	0.310	H1 was rejected
Parental age -> Authoritarian	0.115	1.460	0.072	H2 was rejected
Parental age -> Permissive	0.156	2.052	0.020	H3 was accepted
Parental age -> Emotion regulation	0.064	0.940	0.174	H4 was rejected
Parental education -> Authoritative	0.127	1.564	0.059	H5 was rejected
Parental education -> Authoritarian	-0.361	5.634	0.000	H6 was accepted
Parental education -> Permissive	-0.257	3.509	0.000	H7 was accepted
Parental education -> Emotion regulation	-0.031	0.439	0.330	H8 was rejected
Number of children -> Authoritative	0.007	0.096	0.462	H9 was rejected
Number of children -> Authoritarian	0.076	1.177	0.120	H10 was rejected
Number of children -> Permissive	0.129	1.848	0.032	H11 was accepted
Number of children -> Emotion regulation	-0.227	3.861	0.000	H12 was accepted
Age of children -> Authoritative	-0.096	0.335	0.369	H13 was rejected
Age of children -> Authoritarian	0.055	0.267	0.395	H14 was rejected
Age of children -> Permissive	0.246	1.029	0.152	H15 was rejected
Age of children -> Emotion regulation	0.137	0.568	0.285	H16 was rejected
Gender of children -> Authoritative	-0.118	1.689	0.046	H17 was accepted
Gender of children -> Authoritarian	0.066	0.999	0.159	H18 was rejected
Gender of children -> Permissive	-0.089	1.263	0.103	H19 was rejected
Gender of children -> Emotion regulation	-0.007	0.116	0.454	H20 was rejected
Authoritative -> Emotion regulation	0.162	2.644	0.004	H21 was accepted
Authoritarian -> Emotion regulation	-0.180	2.159	0.015	H22 was accepted
Permissive -> Emotion regulation	-0.290	3.764	0.000	H23 was accepted
Parental age -> Authoritative -> Emotion regulation	-0.007	0.439	0.330	H24 was rejected
Parental age -> Authoritarian -> Emotion regulation	-0.021	1.077	0.141	H25 was rejected
Parental age -> Permissive -> Emotion regulation	-0.045	1.605	0.054	H26 was rejected
Parental education -> Authoritative -> Emotion regulation	0.021	1.227	0.110	H27 was rejected
Parental education -> Authoritarian -> Emotion regulation	0.065	1.917	0.028	H28 was accepted
Parental education -> Permissive -> Emotion regulation	0.075	2.356	0.009	H29 was accepted
Number of children -> Authoritative -> Emotion regulation	0.001	0.087	0.465	H30 was rejected
Number of children -> Authoritarian -> Emotion regulation	-0.014	0.914	0.180	H31 was rejected
Number of children -> Permissive -> Emotion regulation	-0.037	1.627	0.052	H32 was rejected
Age of children -> Authoritative -> Emotion regulation	-0.016	0.300	0.382	H33 was rejected
Age of children -> Authoritarian -> Emotion regulation	-0.010	0.243	0.404	H36 was rejected
Age of children -> Permissive -> Emotion regulation	-0.071	0.942	0.173	H35 was rejected
Gender of children -> Authoritative -> Emotion regulation	-0.019	1.325	0.093	H36 was rejected
Gender of children -> Authoritarian -> Emotion regulation	-0.012	0.839	0.201	H37 was rejected
Gender of children -> Permissive -> Emotion regulation	0.026	1.135	0.128	H38 was rejected

Note: Significance threshold $\beta > 2$; $t > 1.96$; $p < 0.05$.

correlate with poorer emotional regulation. Additionally, the number of children has a significant but low effect on permissive parenting styles ($\beta = 0.129 < 0.2$, $t = 1.848 < 1.96$, $p = 0.032 < 0.05$), indicating that families with more children tend to adopt more permissive parenting styles. Parental age also shows a significant but low effect on permissive parenting styles ($\beta = 0.156$, $t = 2.052 > 1.96$, $p = 0.020 < 0.05$), suggesting that older parents are more likely to adopt permissive parenting styles. However, the effect size is relatively small ($\beta = 0.156 < 0.2$).

The primary variable of influence in the study is parental education. It has a significant and negative effect on authoritarian parenting styles ($\beta = -0.361 > 0.2$, $t = 5.634 > 1.96$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$), indicating that higher-educated parents are less likely to adopt authoritarian parenting styles. Similarly, parental education has a significant and negative effect on permissive parenting styles ($\beta = -0.257 > 0.2$, $t = 3.509 > 1.96$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$), suggesting that higher-educated parents are less likely to be permissive. In contrast, parents with lower levels of education are inclined to embrace more permissive parenting approaches.

Moreover, mediation analysis reveals that permissive ($\beta = 0.075 < 0.2$, $t = 2.356 > 1.96$, $p = 0.009$) and authoritarian parenting styles ($\beta = 0.065 < 0.2$, $t = 1.917 < 1.96$, $p = 0.028 < 0.05$) can mediate the effect of parental education on emotional regulation. Although these mediation effects are statistically significant, they are weak and potentially negligible ($\beta < 0.2$, $t < 1.96$). These findings suggest that parental education influences children's emotional regulation indirectly through permissive and authoritarian parenting styles. Table 5 presents a detailed summary of the statistical calculations and hypothesis testing outcomes.

6. Discussion

6.1. Impact of parenting style on emotion regulation

Our study found that authoritative parenting style has a positive influence on children's emotional regulation abilities. An authoritative parenting style, characterized by a combination of affection, support and clear and consistent rules, helps children develop effective emotional regulation skills. Our findings align with Morris et al. (2007), Eisenberg et al. (2010), Li, Tang, et al. (2023); Li et al. (2023a, 2023b) and Palacios et al. (2022). However, our findings differ in cultural context from theirs.

Furthermore, our study found that authoritarian and permissive parenting styles have been shown to have a negative impact on the development of children's emotional regulation. An authoritarian parenting style, which emphasizes strict control and one-way communication, and a permissive style, which tends to provide unlimited freedom, cause emotional dysfunction in children, such as impulsive behavior and an inability to control emotions. Our study reinforces previous research findings indicating that both overly strict and overly permissive parenting styles hinder children's ability to develop effective emotional regulation skills (Grolnick & Pomerantz, 2009; Li, Tang, et al., 2023; Li et al., 2023a, 2023b; Safaria & Ariani, 2024; Liang et al., 2025).

Thus, an authoritative parenting approach is recommended to support healthy emotional development, while authoritarian and permissive parenting styles need to be avoided or minimized so that children can develop better emotional regulation.

6.2. The role of demographic factors

Demographic factors, such as parental age, education level and number of children in the family, have been shown to have a significant influence on the parenting style adopted, which ultimately influences children's emotional regulation abilities. Previous research shows that older parents tend to adopt a more permissive parenting style. This is most likely due to increased life experience and a tendency to be more relaxed in dealing with parenting challenges with age (Verhoeven et al., 2007; Webb, 2022; Rachel Minkin et al., 2023). On the other hand, parents with a higher level of education tend to avoid authoritarian parenting styles, which emphasize strict control and uncompromising rules (Castillo et al., 2011; Trifan et al., 2014; El-Deen et al., 2021).

These findings indicate that as parents mature and acquire experience, they generally adopt a more permissive parenting style, potentially affecting children's emotional development. This lenient approach, although perhaps enhancing emotional intimacy, may also hinder children's development in

self-regulation and emotional management. Conversely, greater education enables parents to comprehend the significance of balancing control and support, which fosters the development of children's positive emotional regulation.

Consequently, these demographic characteristics directly affect parenting style and indirectly influence children's emotional regulation capabilities.

6.3. Direct influence of demographic factors on emotion regulation

Interestingly, several demographic variables were found to have a direct influence on children's emotional regulation abilities without mediating parenting style. For example, the number of children in the family was found to have a negative relationship with emotional regulation, where the more children in the family, the lower the child's ability to regulate his emotions. This may be due to the reduced individual attention that parents can provide in families with larger numbers of children. The lack of time and resources shared among children makes parents less able to provide adequate emotional support to each child, as has been revealed in previous literature (Downey, 1995; Catipay et al., 2023). Thus, the number of children in the family not only influences parenting style but also has a direct impact on the development of children's emotional regulation.

6.4. Cultural and contextual factors

We derived these findings from a distinct cultural and educational background, specifically from Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia. In this context, religious values and communal principles play a crucial part in daily life. The pronounced emphasis on spiritual growth and moral education in these institutions certainly interacts with the parenting approaches employed by parents, thereby affecting children's emotional outcomes. These interactions may result in different patterns of emotional development compared to children in secular or Western contexts, where religious values may not be a dominant factor in the parenting process (Riany et al., 2017; Zevalink & Riksen-Walraven, 2001; Riany et al., 2022). Thus, the influence of these cultural and religious contexts must be considered when interpreting research findings related to emotion regulation and parenting styles.

6.5. Practical implications

These findings suggest that Islamic schools implement workshops for parents to educate them on the importance of adopting a balanced and supportive parenting style, which plays a crucial role in enhancing children's emotional well-being. Moreover, these programs can be tailored to align with existing religious and communal values, ensuring their relevance and effectiveness in fostering children's emotional development within these educational settings.

Additionally, we recommend that Islamic schools invest in human resource development through specialized training for teachers and school counselors. These training programs should equip educators with evidence-based strategies to support students' emotional regulation while adhering to Islamic educational principles. By implementing these targeted interventions, Islamic schools can cultivate a more nurturing and supportive environment that fosters students' emotional resilience, ultimately contributing to their long-term emotional and social well-being.

6.6. Research limitations and future studies

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. The use of convenience sampling restricts the generalizability of the findings, potentially limiting their applicability to more diverse educational settings or different cultural contexts. Consequently, caution should be exercised when interpreting and extending these results beyond the specific population studied.

The data in this study were primarily collected through parents' subjective reports using online self-report questionnaires. This method introduces the potential for social desirability bias, as respondents may provide answers that align more closely with social norms rather than accurately reflecting their actual parenting practices and experiences.

Future studies are recommended to expand the sample range to include more demographically and culturally diverse populations. Further research should also consider using more varied data collection methods, such as direct observation or in-depth interviews, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between parenting styles and children's emotional regulation. In addition, it is important to explore the long-term impact of parenting styles on children's emotional development, as well as considering other external factors, such as social support and educational interventions that may influence children's emotional regulation.

7. Conclusion

This research shows that parental parenting style has a significant influence on children's emotional regulation abilities in Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia. Authoritative parenting styles have been shown to have a positive impact on children's emotional development, while authoritarian and permissive parenting styles tend to lead to emotional dysfunction. These findings are in line with previous research that emphasizes the importance of supportive and balanced parenting patterns in helping children manage their emotions effectively. Additionally, this study identified that demographic factors, such as age of parents, education level and number of children in the family have a significant influence on the parenting style applied and indirectly also influence children's emotional regulation. Parents who are older and have a higher level of education tend to prefer an authoritative parenting style, which supports better emotional regulation in children. In contrast, a greater number of children in the family was found to correlate with reduced children's emotional regulation abilities, which may be caused by the limited individual attention that parents can provide. Based on these findings, we recommend the implementation of parent training programs for parents, teachers and counselors in Islamic schools. Additionally, the results underscore the need for further research on the emotional impact of technology on students in Islamic educational settings.

Acknowledgments

We sincerely appreciate all the participants in this study for their time and valuable contributions, which were crucial to the success of this research.

Institutional Review Board statement

The Ethical Committee of the Islamic Education Guidance and Counseling Study Program, Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training, Antasari State Islamic University, Banjarmasin, Indonesia, has granted approval for this study on 3 May 2024 (Ref. No. 271/Un.14/II.2.p/05/2024).

Transparency

The authors confirm that the manuscript is an honest, accurate and transparent account of the study; that no vital features of the study have been omitted; and that any discrepancies from the study as planned have been explained. This study followed all ethical practices during writing.

Public interest statement

This research offers practical insights for parents and educators to support students' emotional well-being in Islamic schools.

Credit authorship contribution statement

Hidayat Ma'ruf: Writing – review and editing, Writing – original draft, Validation, Software, Resources, Methodology, Formal analysis and Conceptualization.

Ahmad Juhaidi: Validation, Data curation, Software and Visualization.

Muhammad Rafiq Hafiz: Project administration and Data curation.

Salafuddin Fitri: Software and Data curation.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Funding

No funding was received for the research and writing of this manuscript.

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Data availability statement

The original data necessary for reproducing the aforementioned discoveries are accessible as additional material in this document and will be supplied upon demand.

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