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## Parental Conditional Regard, Family Emotional Processes, and Decision-Making Styles in Indian Adults: Insights from Family Systems Theory

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### Abstract

This study explored the connections between parental conditional regard, perceived criticism, emotional involvement, differentiation of self and decision-making styles, all within an Indian cultural context, a collectivist one. Based on the Family Systems Theory and the Self-Determination Theory, the study sought to explore the interplay between family emotional processes and behavioural decision-making tendencies in culturally interdependent family systems. To achieve this, a quantitative, cross-sectional correlational research design was used on a sample of 226 Indian adults, who were selected using a convenience sampling technique. Standardized self-report instruments were used to gather data on the following: parental conditional positive and negative regard, emotional involvement and perceived criticism, differentiation of self and decision-making styles. The analyses of the data that were performed included Pearson correlations, point-biserial correlations, chi-square analyses, one-way ANOVAs, independent-samples t-tests, and logistic regression analyses. The results showed that these variables had high interrelationships, especially with high positive relationships between parental conditional positive regard and perceived criticism, and emotional involvement and perceived criticism. The differentiation of self was highly correlated with all the main family emotional processes. Parental conditional regard, emotional involvement, and differentiation, however, did not significantly predict dependent or avoidant decision-making styles as was predicted. Family emotional variables showed small but significant negative associations with intuitive decision making. The results point to the possibility that family emotional processes in collectivist cultures can have indirect effects on behaviour, rather than direct ones. Overall, the study highlights the importance of culturally contextualising family systems and psychological functioning within collectivist societies.

**Keywords:** Differentiation of self, Emotional involvement, Family systems, Parental regard, Perceived criticism