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Agreement in parent-adolescent perceptions of parenting behavior: the influence of parental and adolescent narcissism and parents' remembered childhood adversity

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Agreement in parent-adolescent perceptions of parenting behavior: The influence of parental and adolescent narcissism and parents' remembered childhood adversity

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ABSTRACT

Discrepancies in parent and adolescent perceptions of parenting behavior contribute to poor family functioning and negative outcomes. Yet, there is a lack of research examining parent and adolescent personality and family context in relation to parent-adolescent parenting agreement. Narcissistic traits and parents' remembered childhood adversity have previously been linked to both positive and negative parenting. This cross-sectional study aimed at understanding whether parental and adolescent narcissism, at the facet level, and parental past adversity, statistically predict parent-adolescent parenting agreement. Analyses comprised four steps: profile correlations, network analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, and structural equation modelling. Parent-adolescent dyads ($N = 304$; 48 % mothers; 50 % girls) completed self-report measures. Parental authority and distrust were associated with higher agreement that parents utilized more warm and harsh parenting, respectively. Parents remembered emotional neglect was positively associated with agreement that parents used more hostile and controlling parenting and was linked to higher parental vulnerable and antagonistic narcissism. Adolescent self-absorption was positively associated with agreement on harsh parenting. Results demonstrate that narcissistic facets and parents' remembered emotional neglect differentially influence parent-offspring agreement on their perceptions of parenting behavior. Future work might incorporate more multi-dimensional assessments of personality and context to further disentangle associations between personality and parenting.

1. Introduction

Parenting agreement between parent and offspring is particularly important during adolescence, as this is a tumultuous developmental period when individuals begin to gain more independence and desire autonomy from their parents (Assor, 2018). Yet, when parents and adolescents report on parenting, their views often diverge (Hou et al., 2020; Mastrotheodoros et al., 2020). Lack of agreement is significant, being more than just measurement error (De Los Reyes et al., 2015). Discrepancies between parent and adolescent may reflect maladaptive family processes and a lack of awareness in the quality of the parent-offspring relationship, as well as having unique influences on youth mental health outcomes (Nelemans et al., 2023). Parental and adolescent personality are key determinants of parenting (de Haan et al., 2012;

McCabe, 2014). In particular, narcissism has been linked to both adaptive and maladaptive parenting strategies (Rawn et al., 2023; Truhan et al., 2023, 2022) and contributes to reactive and sensitive interpersonal responses (Roche et al., 2013). Therefore, narcissism may show strong associations with agreement in parent-adolescent perceptions of parenting behavior – however, no study to date has tested this empirically. The current study addresses this gap by assessing the association between parental and adolescent personality, specifically narcissism, and parenting agreement. We also consider past parental childhood adversity, as the Tri-Directional Framework of Parent and Offspring Traits and Outcomes highlights parental and offspring personality and parenting are susceptible to various contextual influences, including environmental and family risk factors (Truhan et al., 2024).

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1.1. Parent-offspring parenting agreement

Dyadic investigations of parent-offspring agreement are crucial for identifying traits and contexts that contribute to discrepancies, as such conflict can undermine mutual responsiveness, disrupt family functioning, and heighten risks for youth mental health issues (De Los Reyes & Ohannessian, 2016; Wang & Hawk, 2023). Longitudinal research shows adolescence is marked by adolescents perceiving higher conflict intensity compared to parents, whereas support and control perceptions remain aligned (Mastrotheodoros et al., 2019, 2020). Regarding the broader impact of these discrepancies, Nelemans et al. (2023) found mutually reinforcing associations between higher parent-adolescent discrepancies, conflict, and increased internalizing symptoms like depression and anxiety in adolescents over time. Accordingly, internalizing issues in parents and adolescents exacerbate discrepancies, with parents typically perceiving parenting more positively than adolescents (Hou et al., 2020). The degree of discordance between parents and adolescents may therefore vary based on intraindividual factors, such as mental health symptoms. However, there is limited exploration of how other person-centered traits, such as personality, influence parent-adolescent agreement during this developmental period. One study indicated discrepancies in parent-child personality similarity can affect parenting behaviors like maternal autonomy support (Vrolijk et al., 2022). Thus, further research is needed to enhance our understanding of personality on parenting, to promote healthier parent-offspring relationships and outcomes for adolescents.

1.2. Narcissism and parenting agreement

Recent research indicates both parent and adolescent narcissism may play a significant role in parenting, and that differential associations with parenting are observed depending on the specific narcissistic trait or facet assessed (Truhan et al., 2023, 2022). Narcissism can be conceptualized as three trait dimensions which encompass a multitude of lower-level facets (Miller et al., 2021; Wright & Edershile, 2018). There is a core dimension of antagonism, which concerns a manipulative interpersonal style. The further two dimensions sit on opposing ends of the narcissism spectrum. Agentic extraversion (sometimes grandiosity) reflects self-inflation and dominance. On the opposing end, neurotic narcissism (or vulnerability) encompasses shame and hypersensitivity to criticism.

Considering facets of parental and adolescent narcissism can provide insight into how different dimensions of narcissism influence parenting behavior and contribute to parent-adolescent discrepancies. Extant research indicates dimensions of narcissism are differentially associated with specific parenting behaviors. For instance, paternal neurotic narcissism is associated with reduced warmth, while agentic extraversion relates to less hostility (Truhan et al., 2022). Similarly, parental entitlement (facet of antagonistic narcissism) correlates with punitive and permissive practices, whereas parental authority (facet of agentic extraversion) aligns with warmth and autonomy support (Rawn et al., 2023). However, to date no studies have addressed how narcissism may drive perceptual mismatches between parent and offspring in parenting. Narcissistic traits can impact self-reporting. Vulnerable narcissists use supplication (e.g., seeming weak or incompetent) and self-handicapping (e.g., blaming obstacles rather than self) defensive tactics to shape their self-presentation, while grandiose narcissists justify (e.g., good reasons for bad behavior) and intimidate (e.g., threatening others) to sustain a superior self-concept (Hart et al., 2019). Skewed self-presentation tendencies of grandiose narcissists may lead to parental overstatements of positive parenting behaviors – or it is possible facets of agentic extraversion contribute to more equitable parent-adolescent perceptions of positive parenting. On the other hand, vulnerable narcissists may perceive their relationships as more negative, perhaps viewing themselves as a ‘weak’ parent. Such perceptual gaps are crucial to examine, as they can strain parent-adolescent relationships, leading to

misunderstandings, conflict, and a lack of trust, ultimately impacting family dynamics and adolescent well-being.

Although research on narcissism in adolescents is limited, preliminary findings suggest adolescent narcissistic traits influence perceptions of parenting. Adolescent grandiose narcissism is typically associated with perceptions of more positive reinforcement and paternal warmth, whereas adolescent vulnerable narcissism is associated with greater perceived inconsistent discipline and maternal control (Mechanic & Barry, 2015; Truhan et al., 2023). These traits may therefore cause discrepancies, with grandiose adolescents overestimating more positive, reinforcing behaviors from parents, and vulnerable adolescents perceiving heightened parental inconsistency or behavioral control relative to their parents’ views. Moreover, contextual risk factors such as parents’ adverse childhood experiences (ACEs: abuse, neglect, and household dysfunction during the first 18 years of life) can further shape parent and adolescent perceptions of parenting (Rowell & Neal-Barnett, 2022; Truhan et al., 2023, 2022). These findings reinforce the importance of considering context when examining the relationship between personality and parenting agreement. Therefore, the current study includes an assessment of parental ACEs.

1.3. Adverse childhood experiences, personality, and parenting

Regarding ACEs, experiences of childhood emotional abuse and neglect in particular have a more pronounced impact on increased parental hostility with future children (Rowell & Neal-Barnett, 2022), and adult mental ill health (De Araújo & Lara, 2016; Merrick et al., 2017). Emotional neglect is also positively associated with vulnerable and antagonistic narcissism (Clemens et al., 2022; van Schie et al., 2020). Further, early neglect can mask self-esteem issues, which may have negative long-term developmental consequences. For example, the negative relationship between vulnerable narcissism and self-esteem (Bosson et al., 2008) can be obscured by emotional neglect (Maxwell & Huprich, 2014). Parents with greater vulnerable narcissistic tendencies who experience childhood emotional neglect may develop skewed schemas of the parent-offspring relationship and overly report negative parenting. It is also possible that vulnerable narcissistic parents who experienced childhood adversity actually express more negative parenting behavior, which may be similarly reported by both parent and adolescent.

Thus, the interplay between parental ACEs and narcissistic traits is important for understanding parent-adolescent parenting agreement on use of more positive or negative parenting behaviors. This study examines parent and adolescent narcissistic traits as potential mediators of the association between parental ACEs and parenting agreement. Gniewosz and Gniewosz (2024) argue that discrepancies in family members’ perceptions of parenting are indicators of family functioning, which can significantly impact adolescents’ psychosocial development. Therefore, by identifying specific narcissistic traits and childhood adversities, such as emotional neglect, that influence parenting perceptions, this research can potentially inform interventions that enhance family functioning.

1.4. The current study

This study explores how narcissistic traits in both parents and adolescents, along with parental ACEs, influence agreement in parent-adolescent perceptions of parenting behavior. Based on extant research, we expect narcissistic facets falling under agentic extraversion will have positive associations, whereas narcissistic facets within antagonism or narcissistic neuroticism will have negative associations, with parenting agreement (H1). Our hypotheses regarding ACEs and parenting agreement are largely exploratory – however, parental experience of child emotional abuse or neglect may be significantly associated with lower parenting agreement (H2). Lastly, we hypothesize that vulnerable narcissistic facets, rather than grandiose, will mediate

associations between parental ACEs and parenting agreement (H3).

2. Methods

2.1. Sample and procedure

This study utilized data from a larger cross-sectional project in the United Kingdom, Parents and Children Together (PaCT, 2019–2021). The study was approved by the host university's Ethics Committee (Reference No: EPS 18_190). The total sample included in the current study was 304 parent-adolescent dyads (608 participants in total; approx. 50 % female). Sample details have been presented previously (Truhan et al., 2023, 2022). Further details on the study sample, measures, and statistical analyses are included in Supplementary Materials (SM) Section 1.

2.2. Measures

2.2.1. Adolescent narcissism

Adolescent narcissism was assessed with the 18-item self-report Narcissistic Personality Questionnaire for Children (NPQC; Ang & Yusof, 2006), measuring superiority (6 items), exploitativeness (6 items), self-absorption (3 items), and leadership (3 items).

2.2.2. Parental narcissism

Parents self-reported on narcissism with the 60-item self-report Five Factor Narcissism Inventory – Short Form (FFNI-SF; Sherman et al., 2015), which measures fifteen facets of narcissism – each facet scored by four items. A glossary of parental narcissistic facets is presented in SM Section 2.

2.2.3. Parental adverse childhood experiences

Parents reported on their past ACEs using the 10-item “yes” or “no” Adverse Childhood Experiences Questionnaire (ACE-Q; Felitti et al., 1998) of adverse events that may happen to someone before the age of 18 years.

2.2.4. Parenting behavior

Parents and adolescents responded to the appropriate form of the Parental Acceptance-Rejection Questionnaire/Control – Short Form (PARQ/Control; Rohner et al., 2005), a 29-item questionnaire measuring parental warmth, hostility, indifference, undifferentiated rejection, and behavioral control.

2.3. Statistical analyses

The complete PaCT sample consisted of 333 adolescents and 348 parents. Parents ($N = 42$) and adolescents ($N = 27$) whose offspring or parent did not participate were removed. Parent-adolescent dyads were removed if a parent or adolescent was missing all items on the surveys of interest ($N = 2$ dyads). The final sample used was 304 parent-adolescent dyads. As missing data was <10 % per item, missingness completely at random was not tested. Missing data was handled separately for each phase of analysis. All analyses were conducted in R Studio version 2023.06.1. The analyses involved four phases (see SM Section 1). Briefly, in phase 1, we assessed parent-adolescent agreement by calculating distinctive and overall profile correlations – only distinctive agreement models are presented in the main manuscript. Distinctive profile correlations were calculated based on the 29 items of the PARQ/Control for each parent-adolescent dyad using the *Profile.r* function from the *multicon* package (Sherman & Serfass, 2015). Distinctive correlations measure the association between two profiles of scores on a set of items after controlling for the average profile. In phase 2, we performed predictor selection of parental narcissistic facets and ACEs using network analysis. Two networks, one for parental narcissism (partial correlation network) and one for parent ACEs (mixed graphical model), were

estimated using the *bootnet* package (Epskamp et al., 2018). ACEs and parenting agreement were estimated as a mixed graphical model to account for binary (i.e., ACEs) and continuous (i.e., parenting agreement) data in the same network (Borsboom et al., 2021). In phase 3, a CFA was conducted for both parent and adolescent narcissism using the *lavaan* package (Rosseel, 2012). Maximum likelihood estimation with robust standard errors and a robust test statistic were used for model estimation, and missing data were handled with FIML. Goodness-of-fit was assessed according to Hu and Bentler's (1999) criteria of acceptable (CFI and TLI > 0.90, SRMR < 0.10, RMSEA < 0.08) and excellent fit (CFI and TLI > 0.95, SRMR < 0.08, RMSEA < 0.06). In phase 4, two SEMs were estimated with *lavaan*; the first model comprised parental narcissism and ACEs as exogenous variables and parent-adolescent parenting agreement as an endogenous variable; the second SEM comprised adolescent narcissism and parental ACEs as exogenous variables and parent-adolescent parenting agreement as an endogenous variable.

3. Results

Descriptive statistics for parental and adolescent narcissistic facets and overall and distinctive parenting agreement are presented in Table 1. Correlations are presented in SM Section 3. Parents' ACEs are reported in Table 2. As there were very few parents who experienced domestic violence, physical neglect, and parental incarceration, these ACEs were removed after conducting a power analysis (details in SM Section 3).

3.1. Phase 1: parenting agreement scores

Distinctive parenting agreement was calculated based on 296 parent-adolescent dyads, requiring 80 % of item-level data to be complete. The average distinctive agreement between parents and adolescents was $r = 0.20$ ($SD = 0.35$), and the null hypothesis of no association between self-other ratings was rejected, $t = 9.50$, $p < .001$. Of parent and adolescent demographics, only adolescent sex was associated with distinctive parenting agreement. Parent-son dyads ($M = 0.21$, $SD = 0.27$) had significantly higher distinctive parenting agreement than parent-daughter dyads ($M = 0.14$, $SD = 0.32$), $t(282) = -1.99$, $p < .05$.

3.2. Phase 2: predictor selection via network analysis

Parental authority and distrust had the strongest associations with parenting agreement (Fig. 1). Parental entitlement, shame, thrill-seeking, reactive anger, acclaim-seeking, and need for admiration were weakly connected to parenting agreement. In the mixed graphical model of parental ACEs and parenting agreement, only emotional neglect and divorce exhibited a weak association with parenting agreement (Fig. 2).

3.3. Phase 3: CFAs of parental and adolescent narcissism

The CFA for parental narcissism included eight facets (Phase 2) from 303 parents. After modifications, model fit met acceptable criteria (see Figs. 3A-B).

The CFA of adolescent narcissism included only adolescent superiority, self-absorption, and leadership, due to a problematic correlation between exploitativeness and self-absorption. The modified model achieved an acceptable fit (see Figs. 4A-B). Further details of CFAs are presented in SM Section 3.

3.4. Phase 4: SEMs of parental and adolescent narcissism, ACEs, and parenting agreement

Adolescent sex was controlled for in all models. In the parent model, parental authority and distrust were positively associated with parenting agreement, whereas acclaim-seeking was negatively

Table 1
Descriptive statistics for parent and adolescent narcissism and parenting agreement.

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Range	Skew	Kurtosis
Ad. superiority	304	16.91	4.64	6.00	30.00	24.00	0.36	0.02
Ad. exploitativeness	304	13.64	4.52	5.00	30.00	25.00	0.68	0.69
Ad. leadership	303	8.77	2.96	2.00	15.00	13.00	0.02	-0.52
Ad. self-absorption	304	9.28	2.61	2.00	15.00	13.00	0.01	-0.35
Acclaim-seeking	303	11.79	3.97	4.00	20.00	16.00	-0.05	-0.72
Arrogance	303	7.01	2.66	4.00	16.00	12.00	0.93	0.65
Authority	303	12.46	3.57	4.00	20.00	16.00	-0.20	-0.52
Distrust	302	10.72	3.15	4.00	20.00	16.00	0.39	0.18
Entitlement	302	6.69	2.71	3.00	16.00	13.00	0.91	0.09
Exhibitionism	303	10.85	3.52	4.00	20.00	16.00	0.11	-0.57
Exploitativeness	302	6.54	3.07	3.00	19.00	16.00	1.27	1.04
Grandiose fantasies	303	7.77	3.61	3.00	19.00	16.00	0.81	-0.16
Indifference	303	10.92	3.85	4.00	20.00	16.00	0.09	-0.75
Lack of empathy	303	7.91	3.15	4.00	20.00	16.00	0.86	0.55
Manipulativeness	303	9.48	3.48	4.00	20.00	16.00	0.33	-0.45
Need for admiration	302	10.08	3.54	4.00	20.00	16.00	0.45	-0.25
Reactive anger	303	9.22	3.44	4.00	19.00	15.00	0.33	-0.52
Shame	303	12.75	3.53	4.00	28.00	24.00	0.10	0.48
Thrill-seeking	303	7.78	3.47	4.00	20.00	16.00	0.93	0.28
Distinctive agreement	296	0.20	0.35	-0.71	0.95	1.65	0.66	0.98
Overall agreement	296	0.84	0.46	-0.07	0.99	1.07	0.41	0.61

Note. Ad. = Adolescent.

Table 2
Frequency of parents' past adverse childhood experiences (ACEs).

ACEs	N	Percent of sample
Emotional abuse	65	21.4 %
Parental divorce	62	20.9 %
Physical abuse	56	18.5 %
Parent mental ill health	56	18.5 %
Parent substance abuse	46	15.3 %
Emotional neglect	45	14.9 %
Sexual abuse	28	9.2 %
Domestic violence	24	8.0 %
Physical neglect	9	3.0 %
Parental incarceration	8	2.6 %

associated with parenting agreement (Fig. 5). In the adolescent model, only adolescent self-absorption and parental experience of emotional neglect were significantly associated with parenting agreement (Fig. 6).

Experience of past emotional neglect, and not experiencing parental divorce, were associated with higher parenting agreement. In the mediation model, parental experience of emotional neglect was significantly associated with distrust, shame, and reactive anger. No indirect effects were significant, but several total effects emerged.

3.5. Post-hoc tests: differences in parenting

Post-hoc *t*-tests were conducted to identify significant differences in parent and adolescent reports of parental warmth, hostility, undifferentiated rejection, indifference, and control. Groups were identified based on higher and lower than average narcissistic facet scores (facets significant in SEM), and experience or no experience of parental divorce or emotional neglect. Parents high in authority and their adolescent offspring reported higher parental warmth (than parents with low authority and their adolescent offspring); whereas parents high in distrust and their offspring reported lower warmth and more rejection and

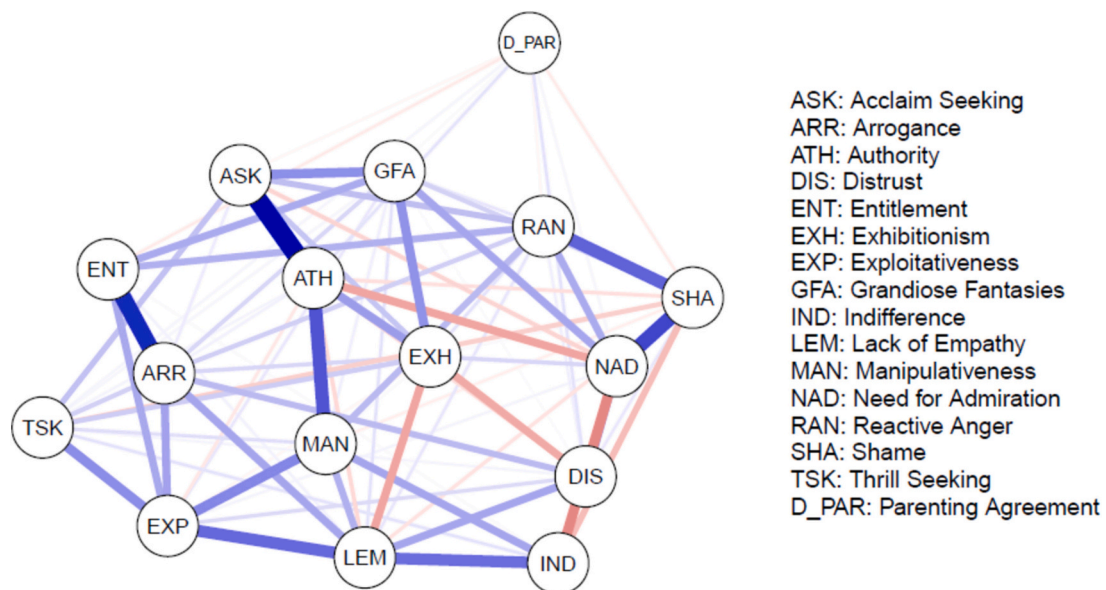


Fig. 1. Network of parental narcissism facets from the FFNI-SF and distinctive parent-adolescent parenting agreement (D_PAR). The width of the edges represents the strength of association among variables. Blue lines represent positive partial correlations, and red lines are negative.

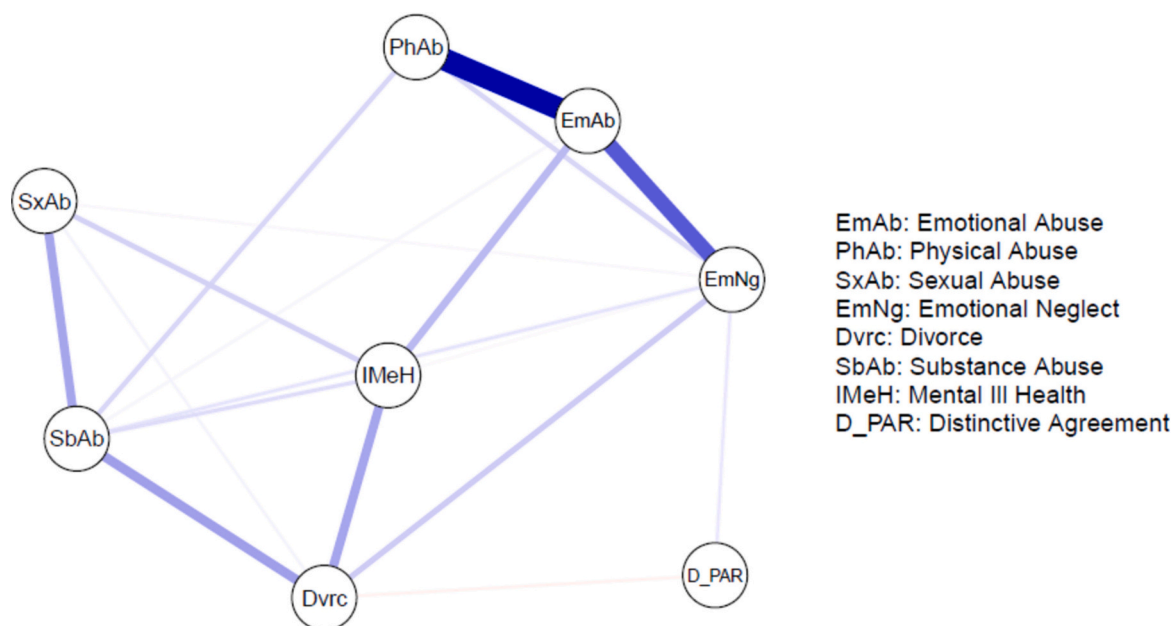


Fig. 2. Mixed graphical model of parental ACEs and distinctive parent-adolescent parenting agreement (D_PAR). The width of the edges represents the strength of association among variables. Blue lines represent positive associations.

indifference. Parents with high acclaim-seeking reported higher indifference, but adolescents of parents with high acclaim-seeking did not agree. Adolescents with high self-absorption and their parent both reported higher parental hostility. Parents who had experienced emotional neglect in childhood reported higher hostility and control, as did their current offspring. Details of post-hoc tests are presented in SM Section 4.

4. Discussion

Parental and adolescent narcissistic facets and parents' past adverse childhood experiences show differential associations with parent-adolescent agreement on parenting behavior. The current study extends previous work which focused on the association between narcissistic traits (agentic extraversion or grandiosity; entitlement or antagonism; vulnerability or neuroticism) and parenting behavior (e.g., parental warmth; Mechanic & Barry, 2015; Rawn et al., 2023; Truhan et al., 2023, 2022). We expand this body of literature by considering lower-level narcissistic facets and ACEs, the degree to which parents and adolescents agree on parenting, as well as the type of parenting behavior (e.g., warm, hostile). Both vulnerable and grandiose narcissistic facets evidenced significant associations with distinctive parenting agreement. For parental ACEs, only emotional neglect and divorce were significantly positively and negatively related to parenting agreement, respectively, and neither parental nor adolescent narcissism mediated these associations.

4.1. Narcissism and parent-adolescent parenting agreement

For parents, narcissistic facets of distrust and authority were positively associated, whereas acclaim-seeking was negatively associated, with parent-adolescent agreement on parenting behavior. Results involving authority (a facet of agentic extraversion) supported our first hypothesis, but distrust (narcissistic neuroticism) and acclaim-seeking (agentic extraversion) displayed opposite associations to what was hypothesized. However, our main analyses did not indicate the 'type' of parenting that parent and offspring agreed on. For example, were they agreeing that the parent generally expressed greater warmth or rejection? Post-hoc tests were conducted to answer this question, which

provide important context to the results. In dyads comprising a parent with high distrust, parenting was characterized by rejection and indifference, indicating high parent-adolescent congruence is not always positive. Parents high in distrust may be more socially withdrawn and avoidant (Rogoza et al., 2022), contributing to inconsistent parenting practices and posing increased risk for adolescents developing poor psychosocial outcomes (De Los Reyes & Ohannessian, 2016).

Although parents with higher acclaim-seeking also self-reported more indifferent parenting, adolescents did not perceive any differences in parenting behavior based on levels of parental acclaim-seeking. Parents with elevated need for acclaim may be more self-focused (MacDonald & Schermer, 2023) and feel they act indifferently towards their adolescent child. However, as adolescence is a period of increased desire for autonomy (Assor, 2018), it is possible adolescents of parents with high-acclaim seeking do not perceive more indifference but rather appreciate a 'hands-off' approach. On the other hand, dyads comprising a parent with high narcissistic authority appear to be most adaptive. Parents and adolescents in these dyads agreed that parents were generally displaying a more warm, supportive style of parenting. The combination of high parental authority and warmth, conceptualized as authoritative parenting in developmental research (Baumrind, 1971), is most effective when adolescents believe in the legitimacy of parental authority (Smetana, 2017). Parents with high authority may be motivated to achieve parenting agreement to maintain positive social relations and be a 'leader' (Glover et al., 2012). When these motivations result in warm and supportive behaviors as perceived by their child, this narcissistic facet may actually have a positive impact on the parent-offspring relationship.

For adolescents, only self-absorption was positively associated with parenting agreement. This did not support our first hypothesis, as self-absorption is generally considered to be a vulnerable narcissistic facet (Miller et al., 2021). Post-hoc findings parallel those obtained with parents regarding parental distrust. Although these parents and adolescents may have higher congruence when it comes to parenting perceptions, it appears they are agreeing more hostile, rejecting parenting is expressed. Results on parental and adolescent vulnerable narcissistic facets support prior research linking narcissistic neuroticism with hostile attributions (Rogoza et al., 2022), maternal hostility, and lack of paternal warmth (Truhan et al., 2022). The current study sheds new

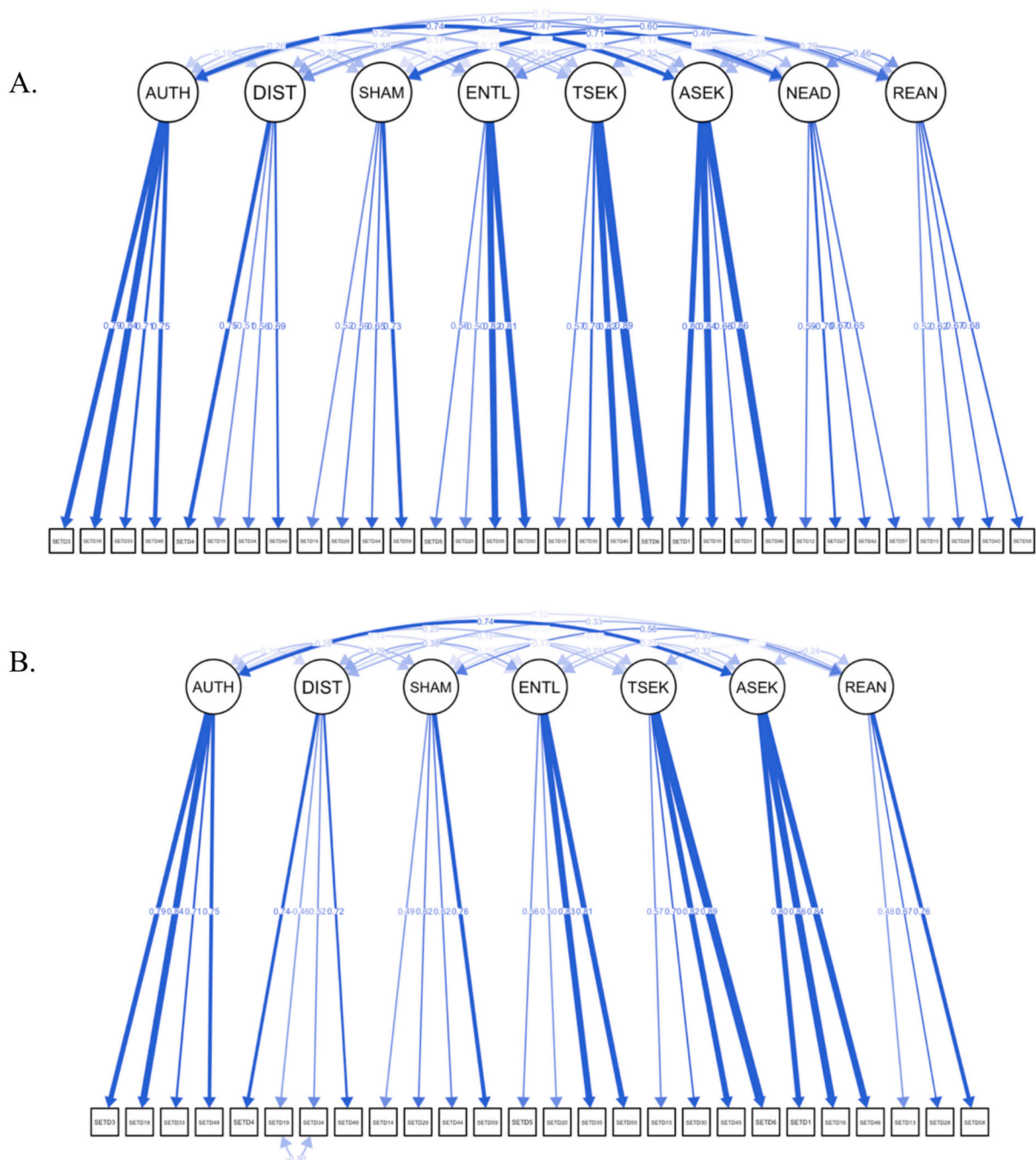


Fig. 3. **A.** CFA of parental narcissism. SRMR and RMSEA indicated an acceptable fit, but CFI, TLI, and chi-square did not ($\chi^2 = 937.90, p < .001$; CFI = 0.87; TLI = 0.85; RMSEA = 0.06; SRMR = 0.07). The range of standardized item loadings was 0.51–0.89. Checks for discriminant validity indicated there were potentially marginal problems between need for admiration and shame (95 % CI Upper-Limit = 0.85) and authority and acclaim-seeking (95 % CI Upper-Limit = 0.82). Modification indices suggested items 31, 43, and 27 be removed, and residual variance be allowed to correlate between items 19 and 34. A moderately problematic correlation between need for admiration and shame was identified (95 % CI Upper-Limit = 0.94), so need for admiration was removed as it had a weak correlation to parenting agreement. **B.** Modified CFA of parental narcissism. Model fit was acceptable ($\chi^2 = 514.47, p < .001$; CFI = 0.92; TLI = 0.91; RMSEA = 0.05; SRMR = 0.06).

light on specific parental and adolescent narcissistic facets associated with parenting agreement, and the type of parenting parent-adolescent dyads agree upon.

4.2. Adversity, narcissism, and parenting agreement

Regarding parents’ past ACEs, parents’ experience of their own parents’ divorce was negatively associated with parenting agreement – although the effect of divorce lost significance in adolescent models.

Interparental conflict and low parent relationship quality are associated with poor child functioning across a range of domains (van Eldik et al., 2020), suggesting parents’ past experiences of divorce may contribute to future relationship difficulties with their own children through negative emotional, behavioral, and cognitive functioning. Results partially supported our second hypothesis regarding emotional neglect being associated with parenting agreement but refuted our hypothesis regarding the direction of association. Post-hoc *t*-tests suggest parents’ experience of emotional neglect in childhood is associated with parent-

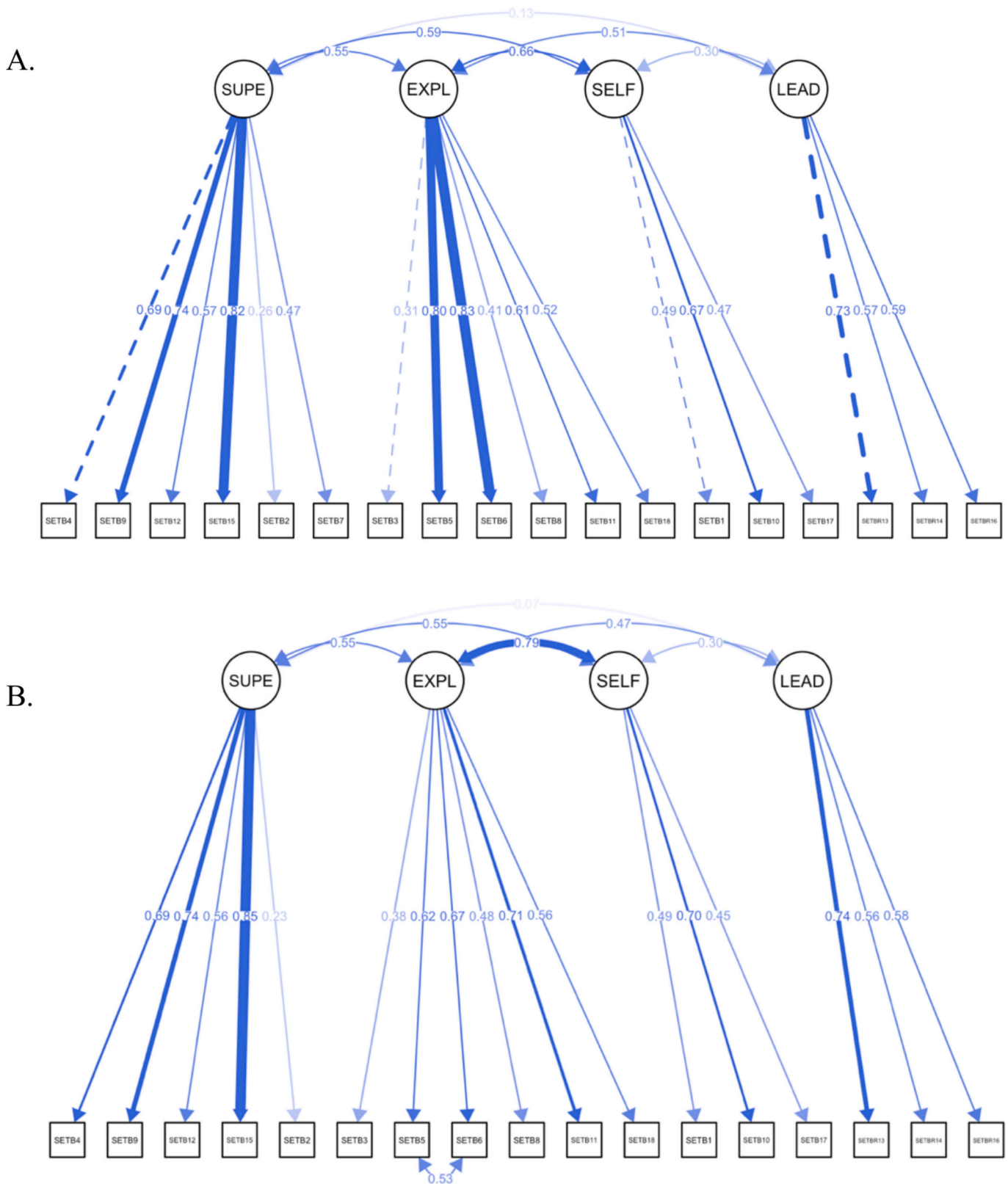


Fig. 4. A. CFA of adolescent narcissism. SRMR and RMSEA indicated an acceptable fit, but chi-square, CFI and TLI did not ($\chi^2 = 353.94, p < .001$; CFI = 0.84; TLI = 0.81; RMSEA = 0.08; SRMR = 0.08). Most standardized item loadings were between 0.41 and 0.83, except item 2 (0.26 loading – superiority) and item 3 (0.31 loading – exploitativeness). All item loadings were significant ($p < .001$). Item 7 was removed, and residual variance was allowed to correlate between items 5 and 6 which led to a problematic correlation between exploitativeness and self-absorption (95 % CI Upper-Limit = 0.93). Several SEMs were tested, including one with both exploitativeness and self-absorption, one with only exploitativeness, and one with only self-absorption (details in SM Section 3). **B.** Modified CFA of adolescent narcissism. The model achieved acceptable to excellent fit ($\chi^2 = 220.31, p < .001$; CFI = 0.92; TLI = 0.90; RMSEA = 0.06; SRMR = 0.06).

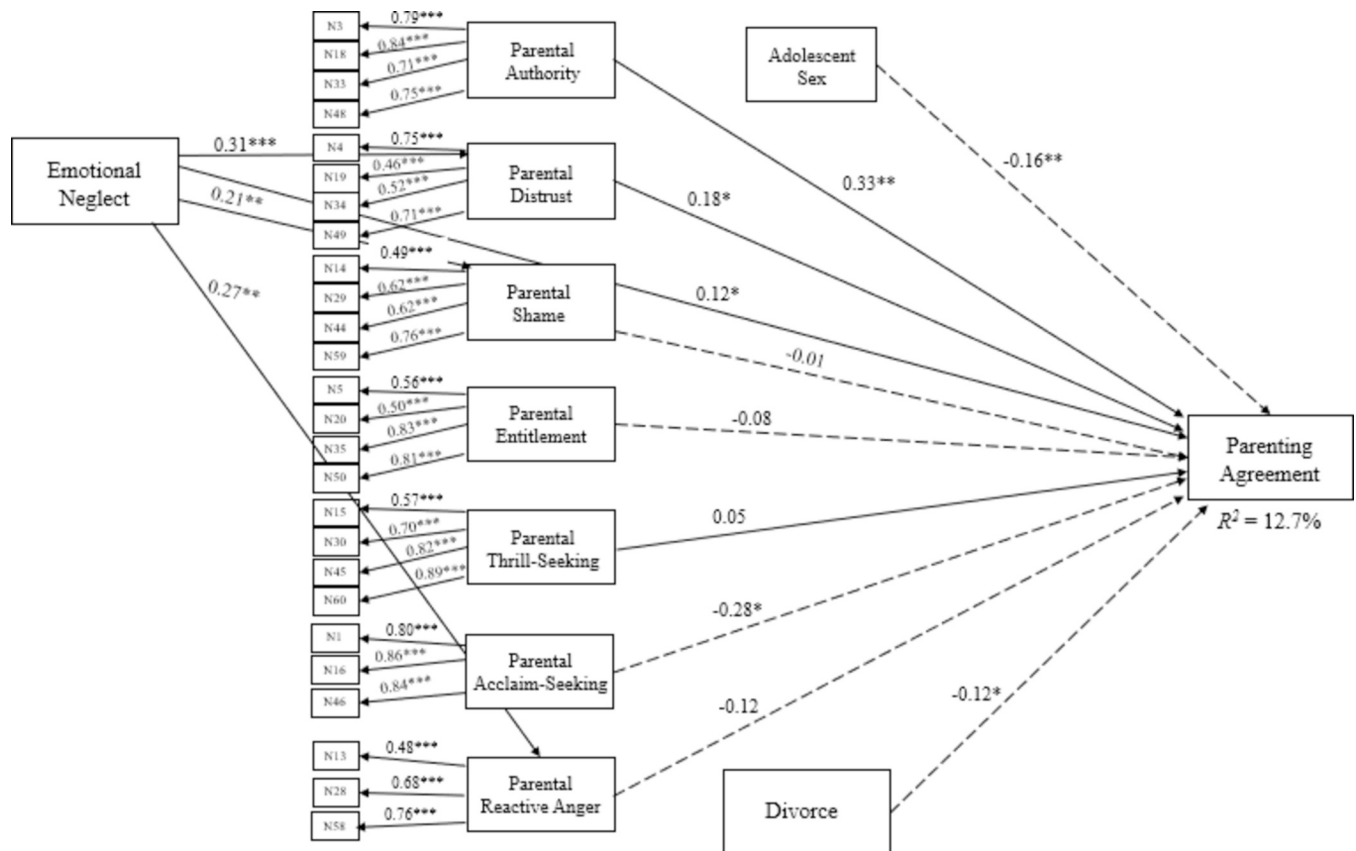


Fig. 5. SEM of parental narcissistic facets, ACEs, and distinctive parenting agreement ($N = 303$). The SEM explained 12.7 % of the variance in parenting agreement. Total effects of emotional neglect and the following narcissistic facets were significant: distrust, entitlement, thrill-seeking, and acclaim-seeking. Parental experience of their own parents’ divorce was not significantly associated with any narcissistic facets.

adolescent agreement that parents display more hostile, controlling parenting. Prior research indicates childhood emotional neglect can have deleterious impacts on adult mental health (De Araújo & Lara, 2016; Merrick et al., 2017). Our study is the first to show that these experiences might also have intergenerational impacts on rejecting, controlling parenting behavior, agreed upon by both parent and adolescent.

Similarly to previous studies (Clemens et al., 2022; Maxwell & Huprich, 2014; van Schie et al., 2020), emotional neglect was only associated with facets of vulnerable or antagonistic narcissism. However, narcissistic facets did not mediate the relationship between parental emotional neglect and parenting agreement; rather, several total effects on parenting agreement emerged. Taking parental distrust as an example, in a household where a parent has previously experienced emotional neglect and has high distrust, they are likely to have even higher parenting agreement with their offspring – parenting characterized by hostile, negative behaviors. These findings may be explained by various psychological models of the cycle of violence, in which parents who experience childhood adversity may go on to perpetrate negative behaviors with their own children through poor attachment, aggressive social learning models, post-traumatic stress, poor emotion regulation, and deficient social information processing (Howitt, 2017). Households in which the parent has higher antagonistic or vulnerable narcissistic traits and has experienced greater childhood adversity, particularly emotional neglect, may therefore be most maladaptive and tumultuous for adolescent offspring.

4.3. Limitations and implications

Although the current study had a number of strengths, including

multiple informants on parenting and robust SEMs of parent and adolescent narcissism and parenting agreement, several limitations must be acknowledged. Parents and adolescents self-reported on narcissism, which may be influenced by social desirability bias (Kowalski et al., 2018). Parents also retrospectively reported on ACEs. A review found adults may underreport ACEs, except in cases of severe neglect or abuse, if they “rely heavily on judgement or interpretation” (Hardt & Rutter, 2004). Some proportion of disagreement on parenting may be due to the subjectivity of the PARQ/Control, as parents and offspring tend to achieve higher agreement on objective parenting reports (Taber, 2010). As our data was cross-sectional, we were not able to determine the direction of effects, just that parental and adolescent narcissism and parents’ ACEs were associated with parenting agreement. Our sample was primarily White British/European, so results cannot be generalized to other races or ethnicities. Hou et al.’s (2020) review suggests parent-adolescent discordance is higher in ethnic minority (vs. White) families in the United States and individualistic (vs. collectivistic) societies. Lastly, it is important to note that parent and adolescent narcissism and parents’ ACEs explained relatively little of the variance in parent-adolescent parenting agreement. Other intraindividual (e.g., temperament), relationship (e.g., marital quality), or environmental (e.g., low SES) factors may be more salient for agreement on parenting between parent and offspring. Future research could include longitudinal assessments of objective and subjective parenting with more diverse participants, and multiple informants of narcissism to account for social desirability bias.

The current study has several theoretical and practical implications. Results highlight the multiplicity of narcissism, such that its many facets exhibit differential associations with relationship and environmental factors, including parenting agreement on the type of parenting

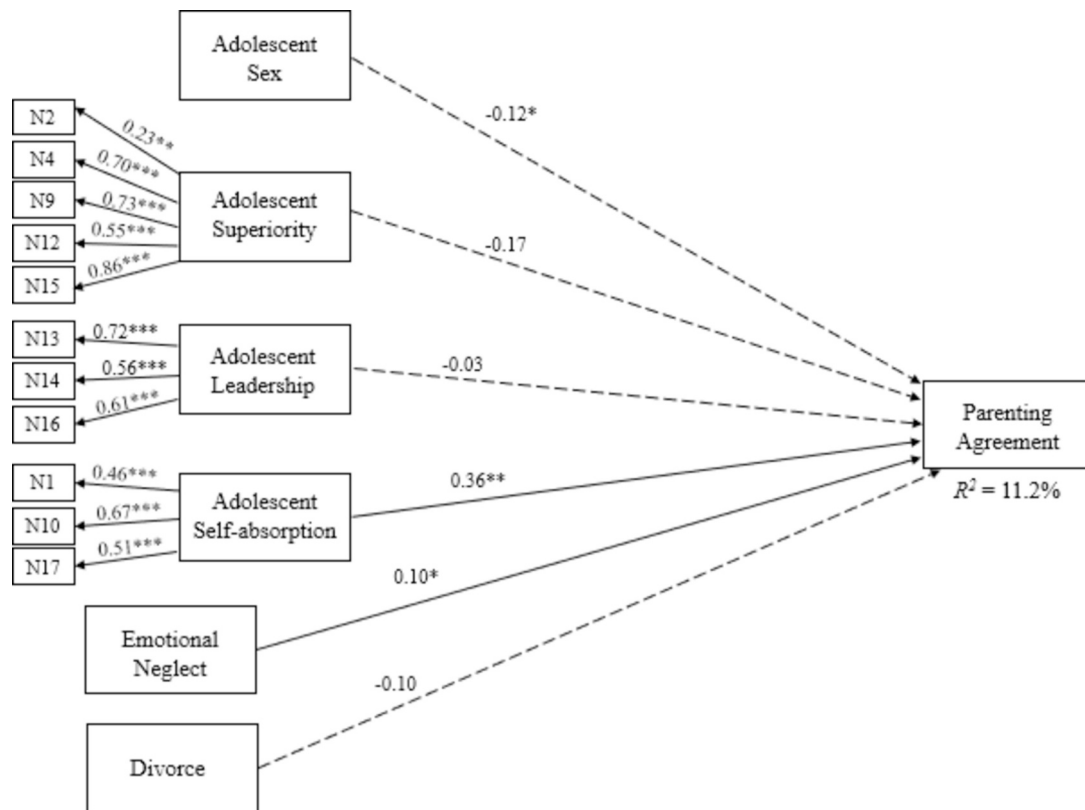


Fig. 6. SEM of adolescent narcissistic facets, parental past ACEs, and distinctive parenting agreement ($N = 304$). The model explained 11.2 % of the variance in parenting agreement. There were no significant associations between parental past emotional neglect and adolescent superiority, self-absorption, or leadership. However, there was a significant total effect of emotional neglect and adolescent self-absorption.

expressed and past childhood adversity. This work provides further support for the body of literature suggesting narcissism is not all ‘bad’, rather it depends on the specific trait or facet (Cai & Luo, 2018). Developmental and personality researchers may wish to consider more multi-faceted assessments of narcissism to achieve better understanding of this complex trait within the parent-offspring relationship and different contexts. Practitioners who work with adolescents and families might also incorporate assessments of narcissism, particularly antagonistic or vulnerable narcissistic facets, to identify specific intraindividual traits contributing to poorer family functioning or parent-offspring discord; in addition to considering parents’ exposure to emotional neglect in their own childhood. Moving forward, research on parent and adolescent personality would benefit from following comprehensive approaches, such as the Tri-Directional Framework of Parent and Offspring Traits and Outcomes (Truhan et al., 2024), to elucidate the complex intraindividual, relationship, and contextual factors that impact family functioning and outcomes for both parents and offspring.

CRedit authorship contribution statement

Taylor E. Truhan: Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Visualization, Project administration, Methodology, Investigation, Formal analysis, Data curation, Conceptualization. **Ceri Welsh:** Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft. **Stefanos Mastrotheodoros:** Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Formal analysis. **Kostas A. Papageorgiou:** Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Supervision, Methodology, Formal analysis, Conceptualization.

Declaration of competing interest

None.

Appendix A. Supplementary data

Supplementary data to this article can be found online at <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2025.113046>.

Data availability

The authors do not have permission to share data.

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