

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Interpersonal Emotion Regulation and Social Exclusion among Turkish and Syrian Adolescents: The Moderating Role of Parental Acceptance-Rejection*

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ARTICLE INFO

Article History

Received: 13.04.2026

Accepted: 27.04.2026

First Published: 15.05.2026

Keywords

Adolescents

Cultural differences

Interpersonal emotion regulation

Parental acceptance-rejection

Social exclusion

Socioeconomic status



ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between interpersonal emotion regulation and forms of social exclusion (being ignored and being excluded) among Turkish and Syrian adolescents, and tested the moderating role of perceived parental acceptance–rejection in these associations. The sample consisted of Turkish (n = 207) and Syrian (n = 172) high school students. Data were collected using measures of interpersonal emotion regulation, social exclusion, and perceived parental behavior. Correlation analyses indicated that interpersonal emotion regulation was negatively associated with being excluded among Turkish adolescents, whereas this association was more limited among Syrian adolescents. Group comparisons revealed that Syrian adolescents reported higher levels of exclusion than their Turkish peers. Socioeconomic status was consistently associated with social exclusion in both groups, with higher socioeconomic status linked to lower levels of exclusion. Moderation analyses showed that perceived parental acceptance–rejection moderated the relationship between interpersonal emotion regulation and exclusion among Turkish adolescents, but not among Syrian adolescents. Specifically, interpersonal emotion regulation was associated with lower levels of exclusion among adolescents perceiving parental acceptance, whereas this association was reversed among those perceiving parental rejection. Overall, the findings suggest that the role of interpersonal emotion regulation in social exclusion varies depending on cultural context and family relationships. The results highlight the importance of addressing students' socio-emotional competencies, family dynamics, and contextual factors in educational settings to reduce social exclusion and promote inclusive school environments.

Please cite this paper as follows:

Demirkesen, F., & Kuyumcu, B. E. (2026). Interpersonal emotion regulation and social exclusion among Turkish and Syrian adolescents: The moderating role of parental acceptance-rejection. *Bulletin of Educational Studies*, 5(1), 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.61326/bes.v5i1.482>

1. Introduction

Adolescence is a critical developmental period characterized by intense biopsychosocial changes, during which social relationships become increasingly central. Peer relationships, in particular, play a decisive role in adolescents' identity development, self-perception, and psychological well-

being. However, social interactions do not always result in positive experiences, and adolescents may be exposed to social exclusion due to both individual characteristics and group dynamics.

Social exclusion refers to being ignored, rejected, or excluded by others within a social context (Williams, 2007).

* This article is based on the master's thesis of the first author, completed under the supervision of the second author as part of the requirements for the master's degree at Gazi University.

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According to the basic needs model of ostracism, social exclusion threatens fundamental psychological needs such as belonging, self-esteem, control, and meaningful existence, and can be conceptualized as a form of “social death.” During adolescence, when the need for peer acceptance is especially salient, the consequences of social exclusion may be particularly profound and long-lasting. Accordingly, social exclusion has been associated with a range of adverse outcomes, including depression, loneliness, lower academic achievement, and school dropout (e.g., Arslan, 2018; Arslan & Yıldırım, 2022; Rudolph et al., 2016).

The emotional impact of social exclusion often involves experiences such as anger, sadness, and loneliness (Arslan & Yıldırım, 2022; Fuhrmann et al., 2019). In this context, emotion regulation may function as a key coping mechanism that helps individuals manage these negative emotional experiences (Zhu et al., 2025). While traditional research has primarily focused on intrapersonal emotion regulation processes (Aldao et al., 2010; Gross, 1998; Gross & Jazaieri, 2014), more recent approaches emphasize that emotion regulation also occurs within social interactions (Gökdağ, 2023).

Interpersonal emotion regulation refers to the use of social resources to regulate one’s own emotions or influence the emotions of others (Hofmann et al., 2016). This process has been conceptualized through four dimensions: soothing (seeking comfort from others), social modeling (observing how others cope), enhancing positive emotions, and perspective taking (Hofmann et al., 2016). These strategies contribute to the quality of social relationships and support social development (Niven et al., 2012). Building on this framework, the present study examines the relationship between interpersonal emotion regulation and forms of social exclusion (being ignored and being excluded) among adolescents.

Schools represent a key context in which adolescents develop social relationships and shape their emotional experiences (Sezer & Gürtepe, 2025). In increasingly diverse educational settings, the presence of students from different cultural backgrounds may complicate processes of social inclusion and exclusion (Plenty & Jonsson, 2017). In the Turkish context, examining the experiences of Syrian adolescents under temporary protection status alongside their Turkish peers provides a valuable opportunity to understand how cultural differences shape social exclusion in school environments.

However, adolescents’ socio-emotional development is not shaped solely by peer relationships. Emotion expression and regulation are initially learned within the family context, particularly through interactions with parents (Morris et al., 2017), and these early experiences influence later social functioning. According to Interpersonal Acceptance-Rejection Theory (IPARTheory; Rohner, 2014), perceived rejection by significant others—such as parents, siblings, or peers—

contributes to the development of psychological maladjustment, including negative self-esteem, emotional instability, and maladaptive interpersonal patterns (Ali & Rohner, 2025; Rohner, 2004).

From this perspective, adolescents who perceive parental rejection may develop defensive or withdrawn interpersonal tendencies, which in turn may influence how they regulate emotions in social contexts and how they experience social exclusion. Accordingly, the effectiveness of interpersonal emotion regulation strategies may vary depending on whether the individual is embedded in a context of perceived acceptance or rejection.

Based on this framework, the present study examines the relationship between interpersonal emotion regulation and experiences of social exclusion (being ignored and being excluded) among Turkish and Syrian adolescents aged 14–18, and tests the moderating role of perceived parental behavior (accepting vs. rejecting) in this relationship.

Research questions:

1. Is there a significant relationship between interpersonal emotion regulation skills and experiences of social exclusion (being ignored and excluded) among Turkish and Syrian adolescents?
2. Do interpersonal emotion regulation skills and experiences of social exclusion (being ignored and excluded) differ according to students' age, gender, nationality, academic achievement, and perceived socioeconomic level?
3. Is perceived parental behavior (affirmative/rejecting) a moderator in the relationship between interpersonal emotion regulation skills and experiences of social exclusion (being ignored and excluded) in Turkish and Syrian adolescents?

2. Method

2.1. Participants

The study sample consisted of 379 students enrolled in four public high schools in the İskenderun district of Hatay, Türkiye, during the 2024–2025 academic year. Participants were recruited with permission from the Provincial Directorate of National Education. Of the participants, 59.1% were female and 40.9% were male; 54.6% were Turkish ($n = 207$) and 45.4% were Syrian ($n = 172$). The students were between 14 and 18 years of age ($M = 15.77$, $SD = 1.22$). A combination of convenience sampling and criterion sampling was used. For the Syrian subsample, inclusion criteria were: (a) being a Syrian student residing in Türkiye under temporary protection status, (b) being enrolled in high school, and (c) having sufficient proficiency in Turkish to complete the measures. Detailed demographic characteristics are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Sample characteristic by nationality.

Variables	Turkish Adolescent (N=207)		Syrian Adolescent (N=172)		
	N	%	N	%	
Gender	Female	108	52.2	116	67.4
	Male	99	47.8	56	32.6
Age	14	36	17.4	31	18.0
	15	60	29.0	44	25.6
	16	52	25.1	37	21.5
	17	55	26.6	34	19.8
	18	4	1.9	26	15.1
Grade Level	9th Grade	52	25.1	50	29.1
	10th Grade	57	27.5	47	27.3
	11th Grade	51	24.6	43	25.0
	12th Grade	47	22.7	32	18.6
Academic Success	Low(0-49)	6	2.9	8	4.7
	Average(50-69)	44	21.3	60	34.9
	Good(70-84)	74	35.7	67	39.0
	Excellent(85-100)	83	40.1	37	21.5
Subjective Socioeconomic Status	Low	10	4.8	31	18.0
	Average	171	82.6	132	76.7
	High	26	12.6	9	5.2
Perceived Parental Attitudes	Accepting	188	90.8	162	94.2
	Rejecting	19	9.2	10	5.8

2.2. Procedures

Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the Ethics Committee of Gazi University (Approval No. 20/2024), along with permission from the Hatay Provincial Directorate of National Education. Data were collected face-to-face by the researcher during regular school hours. Prior to data collection, students were informed about the purpose and procedures of the study, and confidentiality was emphasized. Participation was voluntary, and no identifying information was collected. Parental consent was obtained through multiple channels, including parent meetings organized by schools and WhatsApp groups managed by classroom teachers. Parents were provided with written information about the study and were asked to indicate their consent via a consent form. For parents requiring additional clarification, the researcher provided further information via telephone. In cases where communication barriers arose with parents of Syrian students, Arabic-speaking translators at schools assisted in conveying study information. The instruments were administered in classroom settings under the supervision of the researcher, and the data collection process took approximately 40 minutes.

2.3. Measures

2.3.1. Ostracism experiences scale for adolescents

Adolescents' experiences of social exclusion were assessed using the Ostracism Experiences Scale for Adolescents

developed by Gilman et al. (2013). The scale consists of 11 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = never to 5 = always) and includes two subdimensions: being ignored (ignore; 5 items) and being excluded (exclusion; 6 items). The exclusion subscale is reverse scored. Subscale scores are used independently, with higher scores indicating more frequent experiences of ostracism. In the original study, Cronbach's alpha coefficients were .94 for ignore and .93 for exclusion. In the Turkish adaptation by Mercan (2016), these values were .82 and .83, respectively. In the present study, internal consistency coefficients were .81 (ignore) and .79 (exclusion). When examined by nationality, reliability coefficients were .83 (ignore) and .83 (exclusion) for Turkish adolescents, and .80 (ignore) and .73 (exclusion) for Syrian adolescents.

2.3.2. Interpersonal emotion regulation questionnaire

Interpersonal emotion regulation was assessed using the Interpersonal Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (IERQ) developed by Hofmann et al. (2016). The scale consists of 20 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) and measures four dimensions: social modeling, soothing, enhancing positive emotions, and perspective taking. Both total and subscale scores can be computed, with higher scores indicating greater use of interpersonal emotion regulation strategies. In the original validation study, internal consistency coefficients ranged from .89 to .94. In the Turkish adaptation by Gökdağ et al. (2019),

these values ranged from .81 to .91. In a study conducted with Turkish adolescents (Ray-Yol et al., 2023), coefficients ranged from .63 to .86. In the present study, internal consistency coefficients ranged from .56 to .81. When examined separately by nationality, the total scale reliability was .82 for both Turkish and Syrian adolescents. However, some subdimensions—particularly perspective taking—showed relatively low reliability (e.g., .57 for Turkish and .52 for Syrian adolescents), indicating caution in interpretation.

2.3.3. Personal information form

A personal information form developed by the researcher was used to collect demographic data, including nationality, gender, age, grade level, academic achievement, perceived socioeconomic status, and perceived parental behavior. Academic achievement was assessed using students' self-reported grade point averages on a 100-point scale (categorized as low, average, good, and excellent). Perceived socioeconomic status was assessed with a single item (low, medium, high). Perceived parental behavior was measured using a single closed-ended question: "How would you describe your parents' behavior toward you?" Participants responded by selecting either accepting or rejecting.

2.4. Analytical Plan

Data were analyzed using SPSS 29.0. Initially, data were collected from 415 students; after screening for missing values and outliers, 36 cases were excluded, resulting in a final sample of 379 participants. Normality assumptions were assessed using skewness and kurtosis values, Kolmogorov–Smirnov and

Shapiro–Wilk tests, and visual inspection of histograms, boxplots, and Q–Q plots. Skewness and kurtosis values were within ± 1.5 , indicating acceptable normality (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Pearson product–moment correlation analysis was used to examine relationships between continuous variables. Independent samples t-tests and one-way analyses of variance (ANOVA) were conducted to examine group differences. The Games–Howell post hoc test was used when appropriate. To test the moderating role of perceived parental behavior, Hayes' PROCESS Macro (Model 1) was employed. Perceived parental behavior was coded as a binary variable (0 = accepting, 1 = rejecting). Moderation analyses were conducted separately for each form of social exclusion (being ignored and being excluded) and for Turkish and Syrian students. The level of statistical significance was set at $p < .05$.

3. Results

3.1. RQ1: Correlations among Study Variables

Descriptive statistics and correlations are presented in Table 2. Among Turkish adolescents, total interpersonal emotion regulation (IER) was negatively associated with being excluded ($r = -.19, p < .01$). At the subdimension level, social modeling ($r = -.15, p < .05$) and enhancing positive emotions ($r = -.28, p < .01$) were also negatively correlated with exclusion. No significant associations were found between IER and being ignored. Among Syrian adolescents, only enhancing positive emotions was negatively associated with being ignored ($r = -.25, p < .01$). No other correlations reached statistical significance.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics and correlations by nationality.

Variables	Min- Max	Skewness (Kurtosis)	M(SD)	1	2	3	4	5	6
TURKIYE									
Being Ignored	5-17	.95 (.18)	8.04(3.03)	-					
Being Excluded	7-30	.28 (-.45)	17.35(5.31)	.49**	-				
Total IERQ	34-86	-.22 (-.34)	61.85(11.29)	.04	-.19**	-			
Social Modelling	6-30	.01 (-.22)	18.28(4.81)	.04	-.15*	.81**	-		
Soothing	5-25	.21 (-.76)	13.42(4.93)	.08	-.06	.71**	.31**	-	
Enhancing Positive Effect	11-25	-.63 (-.44)	20.65(3.34)	-.08	-.28**	.61**	.40**	.28**	-
Perspective Taking	4-18	.28 (-.53)	9.50(3.17)	.04	-.08	.59**	.44**	.22**	.08
SYRIA									
Being Ignored	5-17	1.03 (-.04)	7.95(3.20)	-					
Being Excluded	8-30	.26 (-.34)	19.28(4.81)	.16*	-				
Total IERQ	36-90	.09 (-.50)	63.21(11.47)	-.07	-.01	-			
Social Modeling	7-30	-.02 (-.42)	19.26(4.60)	-.08	-.03	.84**	-		
Soothing	5-25	.31 (-.11)	13.23(4.21)	.14	.04	.72**	.39**	-	
Enhancing Positive Effect	11-25	-.47 (-.32)	19.74(3.51)	-.25**	-.11	.65**	.50**	.24**	-
Perspective Taking	4-18	-.11 (-.59)	10.98(3.29)	-.05	.09	.70**	.50**	.41**	.20**

IERQ= Interpersonal Emotion Regulation Questionnaire, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

3.2. RQ2: Group Differences in Study Variables

3.2.1. Age

One-way ANOVA results indicated significant differences across age groups for being ignored, $F(4, 374) = 4.06, p < .01$, and being excluded, $F(4, 374) = 2.75, p < .05$. Post hoc comparisons (Games–Howell) showed that 14-year-old adolescents reported higher levels of being ignored ($M = 8.95$) than 17-year-olds ($M = 7.21$). No significant pairwise differences were found for exclusion.

3.2.2. Gender

As shown in Table 3, gender differences were limited. Among Turkish adolescents, females reported higher levels of enhancing positive emotions, $t(205) = 2.38, p = .018$, whereas males scored higher on perspective taking, $t(205) = -3.77, p < .001$. No gender differences were found for social exclusion. Among Syrian adolescents, females reported higher levels of being ignored than males, $t(170) = 2.48, p = .014$. No other gender differences were observed.

Table 3. Group differences by gender.

Variables	Gender	N	M	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
TURKIYE							
Being Ignored	Female	108	8.27	3.01	1.16	.247	
	Male	99	7.78	3.05			
Being Excluded	Female	108	17.63	5.19	.772	.441	
	Male	99	17.06	5.44			
Total IERQ	Female	108	61.55	10.38	-.409	.683	
	Male	99	62.19	12.26			
Social Modeling	Female	108	18.19	4.49	-.282	.778	
	Male	99	18.38	5.12			
Soothing	Female	108	13.44	4.90	.088	.930	
	Male	99	13.38	4.98			
Enhancing Positive Affect	Female	108	21.18	3.08	2.38	.018*	.33
	Male	99	20.08	3.54			
Perspective Taking	Female	108	8.73	2.82	-3.77	.000**	-.52
	Male	99	10.34	3.33			
SYRIA							
Being Ignored	Female	116	8.36	3.27	2.48	.014*	.40
	Male	56	7.10	2.87			
Being Excluded	Female	116	19.54	4.83	1.022	.308	
	Male	56	18.74	4.75			
Total IERQ	Female	116	63.30	11.21	.152	.880	
	Male	56	63.02	12.11			
Social Modeling	Female	116	19.72	4.55	1.94	.055	
	Male	56	18.29	4.60			
Soothing	Female	116	12.84	4.03	-1.72	.087	
	Male	56	14.02	4.74			
Enhancing Positive Affect	Female	116	19.86	3.52	.632	.528	
	Male	56	19.50	3.52			
Perspective Taking	Female	116	10.87	3.28	-.641	.523	
	Male	56	11.21	3.33			

IERQ= Interpersonal Emotion Regulation Questionnaire, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .001$.

3.2.3. Nationality (Turkish vs. Syrian)

As presented in Table 4, there was no significant difference in total IER between Turkish and Syrian adolescents, $t(377) = -1.15$, $p = .249$. At the subdimension level: Enhancing positive

emotions was higher among Turkish adolescents, $t(377) = 2.57$, $p = .011$. Social modeling and perspective taking were higher among Syrian adolescents, $t(377) = -1.99$, $p = .047$; $t(377) = -4.45$, $p < .001$.

Table 4. Group differences by nationality.

Variables	Nation	N	M	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
Being Ignored	Turkiye	207	8.04	3.03	0.28	.780	
	Syria	172	7.95	3.20			
Being Excluded	Turkiye	207	17.35	5.31	-3.68	<.001***	.38
	Syria	172	19.28	4.81			
Total IERQ	Turkiye	207	61.85	11.29	-1.154	.249	
	Syria	172	63.21	11.47			
Social Modeling	Turkiye	207	18.29	4.81	-1.995	.047*	.22
	Syria	172	19.26	4.60			
Soothing	Turkiye	207	13.42	4.93	0.396	.692	
	Syria	172	13.23	4.21			
Enhancing Positive Affect	Turkiye	207	20.65	3.34	2.571	.011*	.27
	Syria	172	19.74	3.51			
Perspective Taking	Turkiye	207	9.50	3.17	-4.447	<.001***	.47
	Syria	172	10.98	3.29			

IERQ= Interpersonal Emotion Regulation Questionnaire, * $p < .05$, *** $p < .001$.

In terms of social exclusion, being ignored did not differ by nationality, $t(377) = 0.28$, $p = .780$, whereas being excluded was significantly higher among Syrian adolescents ($M = 19.28$, $SD = 4.81$) compared to Turkish adolescents ($M = 17.35$, $SD = 5.31$), $t(377) = -3.68$, $p < .001$. Comparisons based on nationality are presented in Table 4. There was no significant difference between Turkish and Syrian students in terms of total interpersonal emotion regulation score [$t(377) = -1.154$, $p = .249$].

3.2.4. Academic achievement

As shown in Table 5, academic achievement was not consistently associated with study variables. Among Turkish adolescents, significant differences were found for being ignored, $F(3, 203) = 2.86$, $p = .038$, and social modeling, $F(3, 203) = 3.03$, $p = .031$. However, post hoc comparisons (Games–Howell) did not reveal significant pairwise differences. Among Syrian adolescents, no significant differences were found in social exclusion variables. Only soothing differed by academic achievement, $F(3, 168) = 2.69$, $p = .048$.

Table 5. Group differences by academic success.

Variables	Academic Success	TURKIYE						SYRIA					
		N	M	SD	F	p	η^2	N	M	SD	F	p	η^2
Being Ignored	Low(0-49)	6	6.67	1.86	2.86	.038*	.04	8	7.32	3.10	1.23	.302	
	Average(50-69)	44	7.82	3.03				60	8.12	3.26			
	Good(70-84)	74	8.81	3.33				67	8.31	3.49			
	Excellent(85-100)	83	7.57	2.69				37	7.15	2.42			
Being Excluded	Low(0-49)	6	15.33	5.43	0.91	.435		8	16.88	3.27	1.52	.210	
	Average(50-69)	44	16.66	5.11				60	19.91	4.90			
	Good(70-84)	74	18.01	5.62				67	19.51	4.80			
	Excellent(85-100)	83	17.29	5.12				37	18.37	4.83			
Total IERQ	Low(0-49)	6	60.00	9.30	1.91	.129		8	69.88	16.43	1.12	.344	
	Average(50-69)	44	58.43	11.25				60	62.07	11.06			
	Good(70-84)	74	62.51	10.95				67	63.51	12.34			
	Excellent(85-100)	83	63.22	11.54				37	63.08	9.01			
Social Modeling	Low(0-49)	6	21.33	3.98	3.03	.031*	.04	8	20.38	4.07	0.79	.499	
	Average(50-69)	44	16.66	4.39				60	18.55	4.65			
	Good(70-84)	74	18.31	4.69				67	19.58	4.70			
	Excellent(85-100)	83	18.90	4.99				37	19.57	4.48			
Soothing	Low(0-49)	6	10.17	4.83	1.29	.278		8	16.25	6.73	2.69	.048*	.05
	Average(50-69)	44	12.98	5.38				60	13.23	3.80			
	Good(70-84)	74	13.96	4.88				67	13.55	4.32			
	Excellent(85-100)	83	13.40	4.69				37	11.97	3.66			
Enhancing Positive Affect	Low(0-49)	6	20.17	3.60	2.30	.078		8	20.25	3.77	0.25	.862	
	Average(50-69)	44	19.52	3.53				60	19.60	3.58			
	Good(70-84)	74	20.92	3.27				67	19.61	3.47			
	Excellent(85-100)	83	21.05	3.22				37	20.11	3.55			
Perspective Taking	Low(0-49)	6	8.33	4.41	0.79	.502		8	13.00	3.07	1.51	.213	
	Average(50-69)	44	9.27	2.94				60	10.68	3.31			
	Good(70-84)	74	9.32	3.14				67	10.76	3.40			
	Excellent(85-100)	83	9.87	3.24				37	11.43	3.02			

Academic Success= Semester GPA on a 100-point scale, IERQ= Interpersonal Emotion Regulation Questionnaire, *p < .05.

3.2.5. Socioeconomic status

As presented in Table 6, socioeconomic status showed consistent associations with social exclusion. Among Turkish adolescents, significant differences were observed for: Being ignored, $F(2, 204) = 9.28$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .08$; being excluded, $F(2, 204) = 11.93$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .10$. Adolescents with higher socioeconomic status reported lower levels of social exclusion.

A significant difference was also found for perspective taking, $F(2, 204) = 4.55$, $p = .012$. Among Syrian adolescents, socioeconomic status was significantly associated with being excluded, $F(2, 169) = 3.37$, $p = .037$, $\eta^2 = .04$; total IER, $F(2, 169) = 3.89$, $p = .022$, $\eta^2 = .04$; soothing, $F(2, 169) = 6.67$, $p = .002$, $\eta^2 = .07$. Again, adolescents with higher socioeconomic status reported lower levels of exclusion.

Table 6. Group differences by subjective socioeconomic status.

Variables	Subjective Socioeconomic Status	TURKIYE						SYRIA					
		N	M	SD	F	p	η^2	N	M	SD	F	p	η^2
Being Ignored	Low	10	10.00	2.79	9.28	<.001***	.08	31	8.99	3.35	2.36	.098	
	Average	171	8.24	3.07				132	7.67	3.11			
	High	26	5.96	1.54				9	8.86	3.36			
Being Excluded	Low	10	21.70	4.37	11.93	<.001***	.10	31	20.43	5.48	3.37	.037*	.04
	Average	171	17.70	5.10				132	19.26	4.67			
	High	26	13.44	4.88				9	15.78	2.33			
Total IERQ	Low	10	60.50	8.70	1.16	.315		31	68.26	13.33	3.89	.022*	.04
	Average	171	61.46	11.22				132	61.98	11.00			
	High	26	64.96	12.48				9	63.68	6.50			
Social Modeling	Low	10	17.90	3.98	0.08	.922		31	20.81	4.67	2.58	.079	
	Average	171	18.26	4.86				132	18.83	4.63			
	High	26	18.58	4.92				9	20.22	2.54			
Soothing	Low	10	13.50	5.36	1.21	.301		31	15.66	5.04	6.67	.002**	.07
	Average	171	13.20	4.92				132	12.69	3.91			
	High	26	14.81	4.76				9	12.78	2.33			
Enhancing Positive Affect	Low	10	19.00	2.16	1.42	.245		31	20.03	3.21	0.14	.867	
	Average	171	20.78	3.40				132	19.67	3.59			
	High	26	20.42	3.26				9	19.89	3.69			
Perspective Taking	Low	10	10.10	2.47	4.55	.012*	.04	31	11.77	3.15	1.10	.336	
	Average	171	9.22	3.17				132	10.80	3.35			
	High	26	11.15	2.96				9	10.89	2.67			

IERQ= Interpersonal Emotion Regulation* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

3.3. RQ3: Moderation Analyses

The moderating role of perceived parental behavior (approval/rejection) in the relationship between interpersonal emotion regulation skills and social exclusion (being ignored, being excluded) was analyzed using Hayes' PROCESS Macro Model 1.

In Turkish students, the model was found to be significant for exclusion [$F(3, 203) = 6.30, p = .004, R^2 = .085$]. As seen in Table 7, interpersonal emotion regulation negatively predicted exclusion ($\beta = -.51, t = -3.82, p = .000$), while perceived parental behavior also had a significant effect ($\beta = -22.65, t = -3.16, p = .002$). The interaction term was significant ($\beta = .39, t = 3.24, p = .001, \Delta R^2 = .047$).

Table 7. Moderation effects for being excluded (Turkish adolescents).

Variables	β	SE	t	p	95% CI [LL, UL]
Constant	47.39	8.03	5.89	.004**	[31.55, 63.23]
Interpersonal Emotion Regulation	-.51	.13	-3.82	.000***	[-.78, -.25]
Perceived Parenting Behavior	-22.65	7.17	-3.16	.002**	[-36.80, -8.51]
Interpersonal Emotion Regulation \times Perceived Parenting Behavior	.39	.12	3.24	.001**	[.15, .63]

$R^2 = .085, F(3, 203) = 6.30, p = .004,$

** $p < .01, ***p < .001$.

Simple slope analyses show that the relationship between interpersonal emotion regulation and exclusion differs according to parental behavior. This relationship is significantly negative in students with an approving parental perception ($\beta = -.12, t = -3.62, p = .000$), while it is significantly positive in

students with a rejecting parental perception ($\beta = .28, t = 2.35, p = .019$). The model established for being ignored was not found to be significant ($p > .05$). In Syrian students, the moderating effect of perceived parental behavior was not significant for either being ignored or excluded ($p > .05$).

4. Discussion

This study examined the relationship between interpersonal emotion regulation and forms of social exclusion (being ignored and being excluded) in Turkish and Syrian adolescents, and evaluated the role of perceived parental behavior in this relationship. The findings indicate that these relationships vary depending on the type of exclusion, the sociocultural context of the students, and family dynamics.

4.1. Interpersonal Emotion Regulation and Social Exclusion

The findings of the present study indicate that interpersonal emotion regulation is negatively associated with being excluded. This suggests that adolescents' ability to regulate their emotions through others may serve a protective function against more explicit and direct forms of social exclusion encountered in school settings.

In contrast, no significant relationship was found between interpersonal emotion regulation and being ignored, which may be explained by the more implicit and ambiguous nature of this form of exclusion. Williams (2007) suggests that social exclusion threatens fundamental psychological needs such as belonging, self-esteem, control, and meaningful existence, and that different forms of exclusion may differentially affect these needs. From this perspective, the fact that being ignored and being excluded influence distinct psychological processes may account for the differing patterns observed in their relationships with interpersonal emotion regulation.

Moreover, the ambiguous nature of being ignored may make it more difficult for individuals to interpret social cues accurately. This uncertainty may limit the effectiveness of interpersonal emotion regulation strategies in such contexts.

4.2. Cultural Context and Inclusive School Environments

One of the key findings of the study is that Syrian adolescents reported higher levels of exclusion compared to their Turkish peers. This finding is consistent with previous research indicating that students who differ from the majority group in terms of cultural or social characteristics are more likely to experience exclusion in school settings (Kağnıcı, 2017; Stevens et al., 2020).

This result suggests that cultural differences play a significant role in shaping peer relationships and experiences of inclusion within school environments. Indeed, cultural context has been shown to influence both social interaction patterns and emotional responses (Matsumoto & Hwang, 2012; Pfundmair et al., 2015).

Additionally, the finding that Syrian adolescents reported higher use of certain interpersonal emotion regulation strategies may reflect an active effort to adapt to their social environment.

However, the fact that these strategies do not fully mitigate experiences of exclusion suggests that individual-level competencies alone may not be sufficient. Rather, this points to the need for broader structural and contextual support within schools.

Taken together, these findings highlight the importance of developing inclusive and culturally responsive school environments that support students from diverse backgrounds.

4.3. Socio-Demographic Variables and Educational Implications

The results showed that age, gender, academic achievement, and socioeconomic status were related to social exclusion and interpersonal emotion regulation, although these relationships were generally limited and context-dependent.

Among these variables, socioeconomic status emerged as a particularly consistent factor across both groups. Adolescents with higher socioeconomic status reported lower levels of social exclusion, suggesting that access to social and economic resources may play a significant role in shaping peer relationships within school settings.

This finding indicates that social inequalities are reflected not only in academic outcomes but also in students' social experiences. Therefore, addressing socioeconomic disparities may be important for promoting more inclusive peer environments.

Furthermore, among Syrian adolescents, lower socioeconomic status was associated with higher levels of interpersonal emotion regulation. This may indicate that these students rely more heavily on interpersonal strategies as an adaptive response to social challenges. In this sense, interpersonal emotion regulation may function not only as a personal resource but also as a context-dependent coping mechanism.

4.4. The Moderating Role of Perceived Parental Behavior

One of the most notable findings of the study is that perceived parental behavior moderated the relationship between interpersonal emotion regulation and exclusion among Turkish adolescents, but not among Syrian adolescents.

Among Turkish adolescents, the direction of the relationship between interpersonal emotion regulation and exclusion varied depending on whether parental behavior was perceived as accepting or rejecting. Specifically, interpersonal emotion regulation was associated with lower levels of exclusion among adolescents perceiving parental acceptance, whereas this relationship was reversed among those perceiving parental rejection.

This finding can be interpreted within the framework of Rohner (2004)'s Interpersonal Acceptance-Rejection Theory

(IPARTheory). According to this theory, perceived parental rejection is associated with negative self-perceptions, insecure relational schemas, and defensive behavioral patterns. Within such a relational context, attempts to regulate emotions through others may not produce the expected adaptive outcomes. In other words, even when individuals engage in interpersonal emotion regulation strategies, the lack of trust and relational security may undermine the effectiveness of these strategies.

In contrast, the absence of a significant moderating effect among Syrian adolescents may suggest that peer relationships and school-based experiences play a more dominant role than family dynamics in shaping their social experiences. However, this finding should be interpreted with caution, as it may also be influenced by sample characteristics and measurement limitations.

4.5. Implication

The findings of this study suggest that interventions aimed at reducing social exclusion in school settings should adopt a multidimensional approach. In particular, promoting interpersonal emotion regulation skills through social-emotional learning programs, fostering culturally responsive classroom environments, and supporting the social participation of disadvantaged students may be beneficial. In addition, school psychological counseling services should not focus solely on the individual student but should also consider family dynamics and, where appropriate, involve parents in intervention processes. Such holistic approaches may contribute to more effective support for students' social adjustment.

5. Limitation and Conclusion

Several limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings of this study. First, the cross-sectional design limits causal interpretations. Second, the use of self-report measures may introduce response bias. Third, some of the scales used in the study showed relatively low reliability, particularly among Syrian adolescents, which necessitates cautious interpretation of the findings. In addition, perceived parental behavior was assessed using a single closed-ended item, which may not fully capture the complexity of parental attitudes and behaviors. The absence of multi-dimensional measures and the lack of parental self-reports constitute important limitations. Furthermore, the relatively small number of participants who perceived their parents as rejecting resulted in an imbalance between groups, which may have affected the robustness of the moderation analyses. Therefore, the findings related to parental rejection should be interpreted cautiously.

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that the relationship between interpersonal emotion regulation and social exclusion is not uniform, but varies depending on the type of exclusion, cultural context, and family relationships. These findings

underscore the importance of considering both individual and contextual factors in the development of inclusive educational practices.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

All procedures performed in this study involving human participants adhered to the ethical standards set forth by the 1964 Declaration of Helsinki and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards. Ethical approval was obtained from the Gazi University Institute of Educational Sciences ethics committee with the decision number 20 on 10.12.2024. Active parental consent procedures were used. Parents were informed about the study, consent forms were collected and had the opportunity to decline their child's participation. The scales were administered to the students who volunteered.

Conflict of Interest

The authors have no conflict of interest to declare.

Disclosure of Generative AI Use

ChatGPT (OpenAI) was used for language editing and grammar refinement.

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