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Emotionally Unavailable Parenting and Alexithymia: The Mediating Role of Attachment Insecurity

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A B S T R A C T

Objective: This study aimed to explore whether attachment insecurity mediates the relationship between emotionally unavailable parenting and alexithymia in young adults.

Methods and Materials: The study utilized a descriptive correlational design with a sample of 414 Turkish university students, determined based on the Krejcie and Morgan sample size table. Participants were selected through convenience sampling and completed three standardized self-report instruments: the Parental Bonding Instrument (PBI) to assess emotionally unavailable parenting, the Experiences in Close Relationships–Revised (ECR-R) to evaluate attachment insecurity, and the Toronto Alexithymia Scale-20 (TAS-20) to measure alexithymia. Data were analyzed using SPSS version 27 for descriptive and Pearson correlation analyses, while Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was performed using AMOS version 21 to test the hypothesized mediational model. Model fit was evaluated using multiple fit indices.

Findings: Results indicated moderate to high levels of emotionally unavailable parenting (M = 56.42, SD = 8.37), attachment insecurity (M = 82.15, SD = 10.92), and alexithymia (M = 61.78, SD = 9.45). Pearson correlations revealed significant positive relationships among all variables: emotionally unavailable parenting and attachment insecurity ($r = .58$, $p < .001$), emotionally unavailable parenting and alexithymia ($r = .53$, $p < .001$), and attachment insecurity and alexithymia ($r = .61$, $p < .001$). SEM confirmed that attachment insecurity significantly mediated the relationship between emotionally unavailable parenting and alexithymia, with strong model fit indices ($\chi^2/df = 2.12$, CFI = 0.96, RMSEA = 0.048).

Conclusion: The findings highlight the pivotal role of attachment insecurity in linking emotionally unavailable parenting to alexithymia. These results emphasize the importance of enhancing emotional responsiveness in parenting to support healthier emotional development and attachment in young adults.

Keywords: *Emotionally Unavailable Parenting; Attachment Insecurity; Alexithymia*

1. Introduction

The emotional availability of parents plays a foundational role in shaping children's socio-emotional development and psychological well-being. When parenting is marked by emotional unavailability—characterized by detachment, insensitivity, or emotional neglect—children are often left to navigate their inner worlds without guidance or validation, potentially contributing to long-term emotional difficulties such as alexithymia and attachment insecurity. Alexithymia, a multidimensional construct defined by difficulty identifying and expressing feelings, as well as a tendency toward externally oriented thinking, is increasingly linked to early caregiving experiences (Brown et al., 2022; Romeo et al., 2020).

Alexithymia has been associated with a wide range of psychological and relational difficulties, including emotional dysregulation, impaired empathy, and social withdrawal (Alauddin & Anbarasu, 2023; Liu & Lopez, 2024). Recent evidence suggests that alexithymia may develop in response to inadequate emotional scaffolding during early life, particularly in the context of emotionally unavailable or psychologically controlling parenting (Wang & Yang, 2024; Zhao et al., 2023). For instance, Wang and Yang (2024) found that parental psychological control was positively associated with alexithymic traits, mediated by deficits in mental imagery, suggesting that emotionally harsh parenting environments may directly shape how individuals process and express emotions (Wang & Yang, 2024). Moreover, Romeo et al. (2020) emphasized that insecure parental bonding patterns, including neglect and emotional detachment, were significantly related to elevated alexithymia in adults (Romeo et al., 2020).

The construct of attachment insecurity has emerged as a pivotal mediator in understanding the long-term impacts of early emotional neglect and emotionally unavailable parenting (Lester et al., 2024; McDonald et al., 2024). According to attachment theory, children form internal working models based on their interactions with primary caregivers; when these relationships are inconsistent, dismissive, or emotionally barren, children may develop insecure attachment styles—characterized by anxiety, avoidance, or disorganization (Vlaicu & Haidu, 2020). These insecure styles, in turn, contribute to difficulties in identifying, interpreting, and verbalizing emotions, which are hallmarks of alexithymia (Hobson & Neeltje, 2021; Li et al., 2022). The mediating role of attachment insecurity has been supported in multiple studies. For example, Li et al. (2022) demonstrated that alexithymia partially mediated the relationship between poor parental bonding and depressive symptoms, with distinct patterns emerging between males and females in terms of attachment dynamics and emotional awareness (Li et al., 2022).

Importantly, emotionally unavailable parenting is not only a predictor of individual emotion regulation difficulties but is also associated with disruptions in broader family dynamics. Kosić et al. (2025) found that parental alexithymia correlated strongly with dysfunctional family interactions in families with children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), underscoring the intergenerational transmission of emotional unresponsiveness (Kosić et al., 2025). Similarly, Lin et al. (2023) reported that alexithymic parents often experience burnout and reduced social support, which in turn affects the emotional climate of the household and increases the likelihood of children developing emotional regulation deficits (Lin et al., 2023). This bidirectional influence reinforces the need to understand how emotionally unavailable parenting fosters attachment insecurity, thereby laying the groundwork for alexithymic traits.

A growing body of research also highlights the cultural and contextual variability in the expression and transmission of alexithymia. In collectivist cultures such as those in Asia and the Middle East, emotionally restrictive parenting may be more normative, yet still detrimental to emotional development. Zheng and Lopez (2024) found that Chinese college students exposed to parental psychological control exhibited higher alexithymia and lower coping efficacy, suggesting the global relevance of these mechanisms across cultural contexts (Zheng & Lopez, 2024). In the Indian context, Alauddin and Anbarasu (2023) demonstrated a significantly higher level of alexithymia among parents of neurodiverse children, raising concerns about the emotional availability of such caregivers and its cascading impact on the next generation (Alauddin & Anbarasu, 2023). Similarly, Ansari and Fatima (2023) highlighted the mental well-being issues of children raised in “shadow parenting” families, characterized by low emotional visibility and parental detachment (Ansari & Fatima, 2023).

While considerable attention has been given to maternal emotional availability, recent research also emphasizes the role of paternal emotional involvement. Scarzello (2023) found a significant relationship between paternal alexithymia and both internalizing and externalizing problems in early childhood, indicating that emotionally

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disengaged fathers may be as influential as mothers in shaping children's emotional schemas (Scarzello, 2023). Moreover, Jarvers et al. (2024) demonstrated that preschoolers with emotionally dysregulated and alexithymic parents were more likely to develop psychological problems, suggesting that early interventions should target the parent-child emotional dyad as a whole (Jarvers et al., 2024).

The psychological consequences of emotionally unavailable parenting extend into adolescence and adulthood, where they manifest as academic problems, relational conflicts, and mental health symptoms. For instance, Abbasi and Nejad (2025) showed that positive parenting buffered the impact of alexithymia on adolescent aggression, highlighting the importance of emotional warmth in mitigating long-term negative outcomes (Abbasi & Nejad, 2025). Additionally, Radley et al. (2022) found that parents dealing with psychosis often struggle with emotional availability, leading to unmet emotional needs in their children and reduced family cohesion (Radley et al., 2022). These findings indicate that interventions aimed at improving parental emotional responsiveness could have widespread benefits.

In the context of psychosocial development, the absence of emotional validation in early life may also contribute to long-term relational difficulties. Vlaicu and Haidu (2020) proposed that emotionally neglected children are more prone to develop co-dependent relationship patterns in adulthood, wherein they seek validation from emotionally unavailable partners (Vlaicu & Haidu, 2020). Peeligama and Attygalle (2022), through a case study in therapeutic child work, illustrated how unresolved early emotional traumas often manifest through symbolic behavior and culturally embedded narratives in therapy sessions (Peeligama & Attygalle, 2022). These perspectives emphasize the importance of recognizing early caregiving patterns in the assessment and treatment of emotional disorders.

Alexithymia and attachment insecurity are not merely individual traits but are embedded in broader familial and intergenerational contexts. Özdemir et al. (2022) reported that women suffering from genitopelvic pain and penetration disorders—conditions closely linked to emotion regulation—were more likely to report poor parental bonding and higher alexithymia, suggesting a lifelong impact of emotionally unavailable parenting (Özdemir et al., 2022). Furthermore, Brown et al. (2022) validated a reliable parent-report measure of childhood alexithymia, underlining the growing need for accurate tools to assess early emotional competence in developmental research (Brown et al., 2022).

Despite these advances, more empirical work is needed to test integrated models that account for how early parental emotional neglect contributes to adult alexithymia through mediating psychological mechanisms such as attachment insecurity. Liu and Lopez (2024) argued that alexithymia in college students was significantly predicted by parenting style, particularly those marked by authoritarianism and lack of intimacy, and that fear of intimacy acted as a partial mediator (Liu & Lopez, 2024). Likewise, Srivastava et al. (2023) highlighted that complex psychological outcomes often have genetic and environmental underpinnings, further justifying the need for nuanced, multifactorial models of developmental psychopathology (Srivastava et al., 2023). The current study aims to explore how emotionally unavailable parenting may contribute to alexithymic traits in youth, with attachment insecurity serving as a potential mediating mechanism.

2. Methods and Materials

2.1. Study Design and Participants

This study employed a descriptive correlational research design to investigate the mediating role of attachment insecurity in the relationship between emotionally unavailable parenting and alexithymia. The target population consisted of young adults residing in various regions of Turkey. A total of 414 participants were selected based on the sample size recommendations provided by the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table for large populations. Convenience sampling was used for recruitment through online platforms and university networks. Eligibility criteria included being at least 18 years old, having sufficient proficiency in Turkish to complete the questionnaires, and not currently undergoing psychological or psychiatric treatment.

2.2. Measures

2.2.1. Emotionally Unavailable Parenting

To assess emotionally unavailable parenting, the Parental Bonding Instrument (PBI) developed by Parker, Tupling, and Brown (1979) is widely used. The PBI is a 25-item self-report questionnaire that evaluates individuals' perceptions of their parents' behaviors during the first 16 years of life. It contains two main subscales: Care (12 items) and Overprotection (13 items), where low scores on the Care subscale are indicative of emotional unavailability. Items are rated on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 0 (very unlike)

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to 3 (very like). The instrument is administered separately for mothers and fathers, enabling an independent assessment of each parent. Numerous studies have demonstrated the PBI's high test-retest reliability and internal consistency, as well as strong construct and convergent validity across various populations.

2.2.2. Attachment Insecurity

Attachment insecurity can be measured using the Experiences in Close Relationships–Revised (ECR-R) questionnaire developed by Fraley, Waller, and Brennan (2000). The ECR-R is a 36-item self-report instrument that evaluates adult attachment styles along two dimensions: Attachment Anxiety and Attachment Avoidance, each comprising 18 items. Respondents rate items on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Higher scores on either subscale reflect greater levels of attachment insecurity. The ECR-R has been validated in numerous studies, showing high internal consistency (Cronbach's α typically above 0.90 for both dimensions), strong test-retest reliability, and convergent validity with related constructs such as emotional regulation and interpersonal functioning.

2.2.3. Alexithymia

Alexithymia is most commonly assessed using the Toronto Alexithymia Scale-20 (TAS-20), developed by Bagby, Parker, and Taylor (1994). The TAS-20 consists of 20 self-report items divided into three subscales: Difficulty Identifying Feelings (DIF, 7 items), Difficulty Describing Feelings (DDF, 5 items), and Externally Oriented Thinking (EOT, 8 items). Items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), with higher total scores indicating greater levels of alexithymia. The TAS-20 has demonstrated robust psychometric properties, including high internal consistency (Cronbach's α values ranging from 0.78 to 0.83), satisfactory test-retest reliability, and solid construct validity across clinical and non-clinical populations.

2.3. Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics version 27 and AMOS version 21. Descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages, were used to summarize demographic variables. Pearson correlation analysis was employed to assess the bivariate associations between emotionally unavailable parenting, attachment insecurity, and alexithymia. To evaluate the mediating effect of attachment insecurity, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was performed. Model fit was assessed using multiple indices, including Chi-square (χ^2), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Tucker–Lewis Index (TLI), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), and Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR), with acceptable thresholds guiding model evaluation.

3. Findings and Results

The study sample consisted of 414 participants, including 226 females (54.59%) and 188 males (45.41%). The age distribution indicated that 247 participants (59.66%) were between 18 and 25 years old, 103 (24.88%) were between 26 and 35, 42 (10.14%) were between 36 and 45, and 22 (5.31%) were over 45 years old. Regarding educational attainment, 186 participants (44.93%) had completed undergraduate studies, 152 (36.71%) held postgraduate degrees, and 76 (18.36%) had finished high school or an equivalent level. Participants were geographically diverse, with representation from urban centers such as Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, and smaller regional cities across Turkey.

Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations for Study Variables (N = 414)

Variable	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)
Emotionally Unavailable Parenting	56.42	8.37
Attachment Insecurity	82.15	10.92
Alexithymia	61.78	9.45

Descriptive statistics indicated that the participants reported moderately high levels of emotionally unavailable parenting (M = 56.42, SD = 8.37) and attachment insecurity (M = 82.15, SD = 10.92). The mean score for alexithymia was 61.78 (SD = 9.45), suggesting that a substantial portion of the sample fell within the range typically considered clinically relevant for alexithymic traits (Table 1).

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Before conducting correlation and SEM analyses, assumptions of normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, and multicollinearity were examined. Skewness and kurtosis values for emotionally unavailable parenting (skewness = 0.62, kurtosis = −0.27), attachment insecurity (skewness = 0.74, kurtosis = 0.11), and alexithymia (skewness = 0.81, kurtosis = −0.18) indicated acceptable univariate normality. Linearity was confirmed through scatterplot inspections, which showed approximately linear relationships between the primary variables. Homoscedasticity was evaluated using Levene's Test, which yielded non-significant results across group comparisons (e.g., F = 1.29, p = .256 for parenting scores by gender), suggesting equal variances. Multicollinearity diagnostics revealed that all variance inflation factor (VIF) values were below 2.0 (e.g., VIF for alexithymia = 1.46), indicating no significant multicollinearity issues.

Table 2

Pearson Correlations and p-values Among Variables (N = 414)

Variables	1	2	3
1. Emotionally Unavailable Parenting	—	.58** (p < .001)	.53** (p < .001)
2. Attachment Insecurity	.58** (p < .001)	—	.61** (p < .001)
3. Alexithymia	.53** (p < .001)	.61** (p < .001)	—

As shown in Table 2, emotionally unavailable parenting was significantly and positively correlated with attachment insecurity (r = .58, p < .001) and alexithymia (r = .53, p < .001). Additionally, a strong correlation was observed between attachment insecurity and alexithymia (r = .61, p < .001), supporting the hypothesized relationships among the variables.

Table 3

Structural Model Fit Indices

Fit Index	Value	Recommended Threshold
χ^2 (Chi-square)	184.65	—
df	87	—
χ^2/df	2.12	< 3.00
GFI	0.94	≥ 0.90
AGFI	0.91	≥ 0.90
CFI	0.96	≥ 0.95
TLI	0.95	≥ 0.95
RMSEA	0.048	≤ 0.06

The structural model demonstrated a good overall fit with the data, as indicated by acceptable fit indices: $\chi^2(87)$ = 184.65, χ^2/df = 2.12, GFI = 0.94, AGFI = 0.91, CFI = 0.96, TLI = 0.95, and RMSEA = 0.048. These values meet or exceed the commonly accepted thresholds, supporting the adequacy of the proposed model structure (Table 3).

Table 4

Total, Direct, and Indirect Effects Between Variables (N = 414)

Path	B	S.E.	β (Beta)	p
Emotionally Unavailable → Attachment Insecurity	0.72	0.08	0.58	< .001
Attachment Insecurity → Alexithymia	0.85	0.09	0.61	< .001
Emotionally Unavailable → Alexithymia (Direct)	0.41	0.07	0.33	< .001
Emotionally Unavailable → Alexithymia (Indirect)	0.61 × 0.72 = 0.44	—	—	—
Emotionally Unavailable → Alexithymia (Total)	0.85	—	—	—

Path analysis revealed a significant direct effect of emotionally unavailable parenting on attachment insecurity (B = 0.72, β = 0.58, p < .001), and a strong direct effect of attachment insecurity on alexithymia (B = 0.85, β = 0.61, p < .001). The direct path from emotionally unavailable parenting to alexithymia was also significant (B = 0.41, β =

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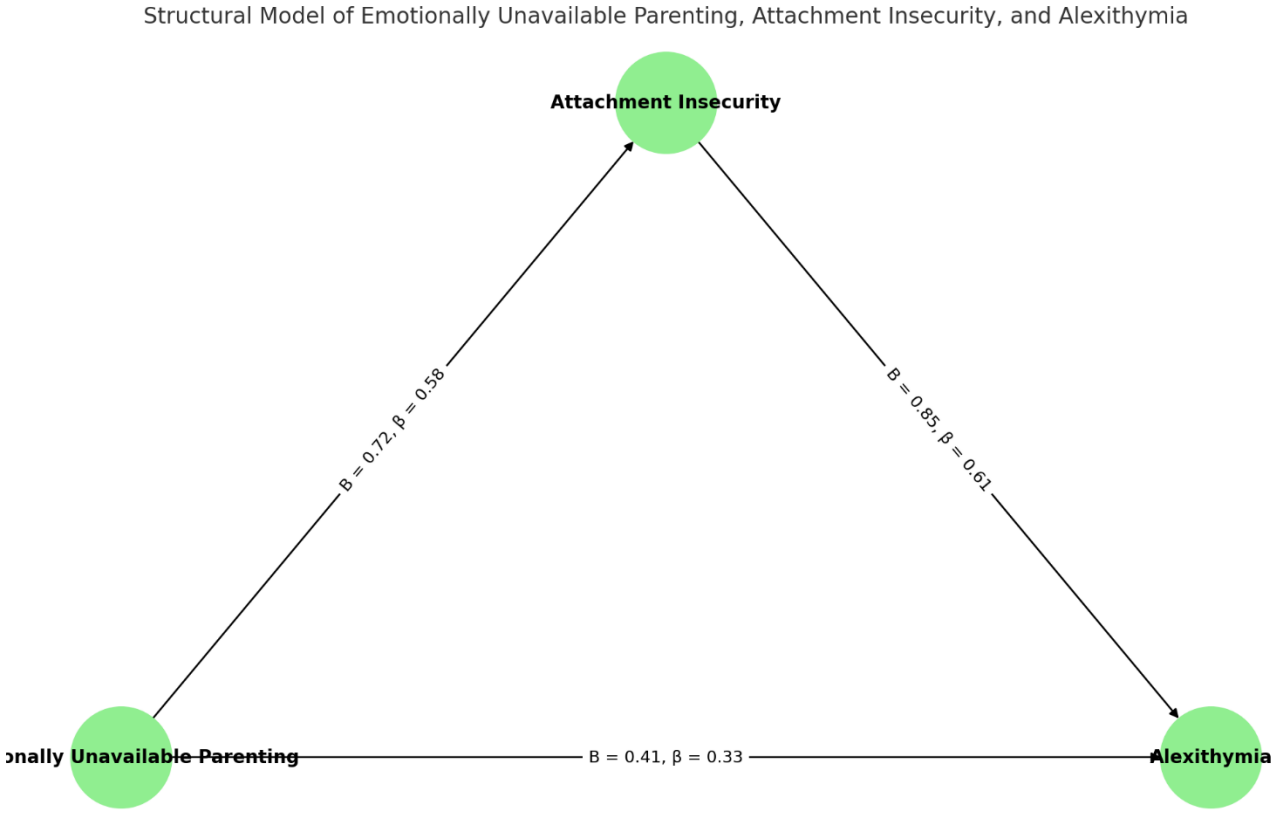
0.33, p < .001). The indirect effect of emotionally unavailable parenting on alexithymia through attachment insecurity was calculated to be 0.44, indicating partial mediation. The total effect of emotionally unavailable parenting on alexithymia was 0.85, confirming the substantial influence of early parenting on emotional outcomes (Table 4).

Figure 1

Structural Model of The Study



4. Discussion and Conclusion

The primary objective of this study was to examine the mediating role of attachment insecurity in the relationship between emotionally unavailable parenting and alexithymia among young adults. The results of Pearson correlation analysis revealed significant positive associations between emotionally unavailable parenting and both attachment insecurity and alexithymia. Additionally, attachment insecurity was significantly associated with alexithymia. Structural Equation Modeling further supported the hypothesized mediating model, showing that emotionally unavailable parenting predicted increased levels of alexithymia indirectly through elevated attachment insecurity. These findings underscore the psychological mechanisms through which early caregiving experiences shape emotional processing in later stages of development.

The finding that emotionally unavailable parenting is directly associated with higher alexithymia levels is consistent with previous studies. For example, Wang and Yang (2024) demonstrated that parental psychological control—a feature closely aligned with emotional unavailability—was positively correlated with alexithymic traits in college students (Wang & Yang, 2024). Similarly, Zhao et al. (2023) found that parental bonding significantly influenced the development of alexithymia, particularly in individuals with genetic vulnerability to emotion regulation issues (Zhao et al., 2023). These results reinforce the view that early emotional neglect impairs the development of emotional awareness and expression, leading to difficulties in identifying and verbalizing emotions—core components of alexithymia.

In support of our second hypothesis, attachment insecurity was found to mediate the relationship between

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emotionally unavailable parenting and alexithymia. This is consistent with the theoretical framework of attachment theory, which posits that emotionally attuned parenting promotes secure attachment, while unresponsive or neglectful parenting fosters insecurity in attachment representations. Research by Li et al. (2022) highlighted how attachment insecurity mediated the relationship between poor parental bonding and mental health outcomes, with alexithymia playing a crucial role in that pathway (Li et al., 2022). Similarly, McDonald et al. (2024) and Lester et al. (2024) emphasized that parent-focused interventions aimed at enhancing emotional engagement reduced children's internalizing symptoms and increased emotional competence, further suggesting that insecure attachment serves as a critical intermediary mechanism (Lester et al., 2024; McDonald et al., 2024).

This mediating effect aligns with the findings of Jarvers et al. (2024), who noted that alexithymia and attachment difficulties were intertwined in the emotional development of preschoolers exposed to parental emotional dysregulation (Jarvers et al., 2024). Our findings also echo those of Kosić et al. (2025), who observed strong associations between parental alexithymia and disturbed family dynamics in families with children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (Kosić et al., 2025). Such dysfunctional dynamics likely arise from a lack of emotional availability and attunement, which not only disrupt secure attachment formation but also hinder children's emotional literacy.

Moreover, our findings suggest that the experience of emotionally unavailable parenting is not merely an isolated relational factor but a systemic influence that interacts with cognitive-affective development. For instance, Romeo et al. (2020) argued that both maternal and paternal bonding deficits significantly predicted alexithymia and chronic pain disorders such as fibromyalgia, indicating the pervasive effects of emotional disconnection across domains (Romeo et al., 2020). Hobson and Neeltje (2021) found congruent results when they demonstrated high correspondence between parental alexithymia and children's alexithymic symptoms, especially in those with language development disorders (Hobson & Neeltje, 2021). Our findings thus strengthen the notion that attachment insecurity serves as a psychological filter through which early emotional deprivation affects later emotional dysfunction.

Further contextualizing our results, studies conducted in diverse cultural settings provide additional validation for the observed relationships. Zheng and Lopez (2024), studying Chinese college students, found that parental psychological control was associated with higher levels of alexithymia and poor coping strategies, mediated by diminished self-efficacy (Zheng & Lopez, 2024). Likewise, Lin et al. (2023) identified a mediating effect of perceived social support in the relationship between parental alexithymia and parental burnout, implying that emotional connection within the family unit influences not only children's but also parents' psychological outcomes (Lin et al., 2023). Our study, conducted within the Turkish context, adds to this growing body of cross-cultural research suggesting that emotional unavailability in parenting is a universal risk factor for emotional dysregulation.

The role of fathers in these dynamics should not be underestimated. Scarzello (2023) demonstrated that paternal alexithymia was a significant predictor of both internalizing and externalizing problems in young children, indicating that emotional availability from both parents contributes to secure attachment and emotional literacy (Scarzello, 2023). Additionally, studies like those by Alauddin and Anbarasu (2023) have shown that parents of children with neurodevelopmental disorders exhibit higher levels of alexithymia themselves, perpetuating a cycle of emotional disengagement across generations (Alauddin & Anbarasu, 2023). This reciprocal pattern was echoed in Ansari and Fatima's (2023) qualitative work, which described how "shadow parenting"—characterized by emotional invisibility—led to disoriented identity formation and emotional confusion in children (Ansari & Fatima, 2023).

From a developmental perspective, alexithymia should not be seen merely as a static personality trait but as an outcome of dynamic, relational, and environmental influences over time. As Peeligama and Attygalle (2022) illustrated through therapeutic case work, children often express their unmet emotional needs through symbolic or culturally encoded behavior, which is rooted in early emotional disconnection (Peeligama & Attygalle, 2022). Vlaicu and Haidu (2020) further noted that unresolved emotional deprivation during childhood could manifest as co-dependent behaviors in adult intimate relationships (Vlaicu & Haidu, 2020). These findings support the developmental continuity proposed in our model, whereby emotionally unavailable parenting leads to insecure attachment, which in turn fosters long-term alexithymic tendencies.

In light of these findings, the validation of our mediational model through SEM provides empirical support for multidimensional intervention strategies that address both parental emotional availability and youth attachment

patterns. Brown et al. (2022) emphasized the need for psychometrically validated tools to assess alexithymia in children and adolescents, which can guide clinicians and researchers in early identification and intervention (Brown et al., 2022). Mbutitia and Adeli (2020) also highlighted that building resilience in emotionally neglected children requires acknowledgment of invisible traumas and an emotionally responsive caregiving environment (Mbutitia & Adeli, 2020). The consistency between our findings and previous studies demonstrates a compelling need for systemic approaches that strengthen parent-child emotional communication and secure attachment formation.

5. Limitations & Suggestions

Despite the robustness of the statistical findings, this study is not without limitations. First, the use of self-report questionnaires for all constructs introduces the potential for common method bias and social desirability effects. Participants may have underreported or overreported parenting behaviors or emotional symptoms based on memory distortions or impression management. Second, the cross-sectional nature of the study prevents causal inference. While the proposed mediational model fits the data well, longitudinal designs would be necessary to confirm the directionality of the observed relationships. Third, the sample consisted solely of young adults in Turkey, limiting the generalizability of the findings to other age groups or cultural contexts. Future studies should strive for more representative and culturally diverse samples.

Future studies should adopt longitudinal and multi-informant designs to better capture the temporal sequence of emotionally unavailable parenting, attachment insecurity, and alexithymia. Employing qualitative methods, such as in-depth interviews or observational coding of parent-child interactions, may yield richer insights into the subtle manifestations of emotional unavailability. Additionally, future research could investigate potential moderating variables, such as gender, temperament, resilience, and cultural beliefs about emotional expression. Finally, studies exploring the neurobiological correlates of alexithymia in individuals exposed to emotionally unavailable parenting could advance the integration of psychological and neuroscientific models in this field.

Given the central role of parental emotional availability in emotional development, interventions targeting parent-child emotional communication are imperative. Parenting programs should emphasize the importance of attuned and responsive caregiving and provide skills for identifying and responding to children's emotional needs. Therapeutic strategies such as emotion-focused therapy or attachment-based family therapy may help mitigate the long-term effects of emotionally unavailable parenting. School psychologists and counselors should be trained to identify signs of alexithymia and attachment insecurity early, providing timely support to at-risk youth. Policies and educational efforts that promote emotionally intelligent parenting can contribute to long-term psychological resilience across generations.

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Declaration of Interest

The authors of this article declared no conflict of interest.

Ethical Considerations

The study protocol adhered to the principles outlined in the Helsinki Declaration, which provides guidelines for ethical research involving human participants.

Transparency of Data

In accordance with the principles of transparency and open research, we declare that all data and materials used in this study are available upon request.

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Authors' Contributions

All authors equally contributed to this article.

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