KMAN PUBLISHING INSTITUTE
Journal Website

Article history:
Received 14 May 2026
Revised 11 September 2026
Accepted 18 September 2026
Initial Publication 17 November 2026
Final Publication 01 January 2027

KMAN Counseling & Psychology Nexus

Volume 5, pp 1-14

E-ISSN: 3041-9026

Prediction of Identity Instability Based on the Quality of Object Relations: The Mediating Roles of Mental Pain and Emotion Regulation Difficulties in Adolescents with Self-Injurious Behavior

Fatemeh Zhinous. Malekzadeh[1], Mohammad. Mohammadipour[2*], Mahmoud. Jajarmi[1]

[1] Department of Counseling, Boj.C, Islamic Azad University, Bojnourd, Iran
[2] Department of Psychology, Qu.C., Islamic Azad University, Quchan, Iran

*** Corresponding author email address**: mmohammadipour@iau.ac.ir

A r t i c l e I n f o

Article type:
Original Research
Section:
Clinical Psychology

How to cite this article:
Malekzadeh, F. Z., Mohammadipour, M., & Jajarmi, M. (2027). Prediction of Identity Instability Based on the Quality of Object Relations: The Mediating Roles of Mental Pain and Emotion Regulation Difficulties in Adolescents with Self-Injurious Behavior. *KMAN Conseling and Psychology Nexus, 5*, 1-14.
http://doi.org/10.61838/kman.psynexus.6694

© 2027 the authors. Published by KMAN Publication Inc. (KMANPUB), Ontario, Canada. This is an open access article under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0) License.

A B S T R A C T

This study examined whether the quality of object relations predicts identity instability in adolescents with self-injurious behavior and whether mental pain and emotion regulation difficulties mediate this association. A descriptive-correlational design was used. Participants were 310 upper-secondary public-school students with self-injurious behavior in Gonbad-e Kavus during the 2024-2025 academic year, selected through cluster random sampling. Measures included the Identity Instability Scale, the Bell Object Relations Inventory, the Orbach and Mikulincer Mental Pain Scale, the 16-item Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale, and the Inventory of Statements About Self-Injury for identification of self-injurious behavior. Pearson correlations, path analysis, and bootstrap tests of indirect effects were performed. Object-relational disturbance correlated positively with identity instability ($r = .474$), mental pain ($r = .531$), and emotion regulation difficulties ($r = .525$; all $p < .001$). Direct paths from object relations to identity instability ($\beta = .152$, $p = .028$), mental pain ($\beta = .524$, $p < .001$), and emotion regulation difficulties ($\beta = .543$, $p < .001$) were significant. Mental pain ($\beta = .497$, $p < .001$) and emotion regulation difficulties ($\beta = .175$, $p = .010$) also positively predicted identity instability. Bootstrap analyses supported significant indirect effects through mental pain ($\beta = .234$, 95% CI [.143, .347], $p = .008$) and emotion regulation difficulties ($\beta = .187$, 95% CI [.097, .303], $p = .007$). Poorer object-relational quality may be associated with unstable identity both directly and through heightened psychological pain and impaired emotion regulation. These findings highlight relational and affect-regulatory processes as clinically relevant targets when assessing adolescents who engage in self-injurious behavior.

Keywords: *identity instability; object relations; mental pain; emotion regulation difficulties; self-injurious behavior; adolescence*

1. Introduction

Adolescence is a critical developmental period characterized by profound biological, cognitive, emotional, interpersonal, and social transformations that require the individual to reorganize earlier self-representations and construct an increasingly coherent and differentiated sense of identity. One of the central developmental tasks of this period is the consolidation of a relatively stable understanding of who one is, how one relates to others, and what values, goals, and commitments organize one's life. Erikson conceptualized adolescence as the developmental stage in which the tension between identity and role confusion becomes especially salient, such that successful development requires the integration of past identifications, present experiences, and anticipated future roles into a coherent sense of self (Erikson, 1968). When this integrative process is disrupted, adolescents may experience substantial fluctuations in self-definition, uncertainty regarding personal values and goals, dependence on interpersonal feedback, and inconsistency in the way they understand themselves across situations. Contemporary developmental and clinical perspectives similarly emphasize that identity disturbance during adolescence cannot be regarded merely as ordinary experimentation when instability becomes pervasive, functionally impairing, or closely intertwined with psychopathology and maladaptive behaviors (Normandin et al., 2023; Yenen Menderes & Çuhadaroğlu, 2025).

Identity instability refers to marked variability, fragmentation, or discontinuity in an individual's experience of self and may involve self-disconnection, excessive dependence on others for self-definition, inconsistency in values and goals, and difficulty maintaining a continuous self-representation across time and interpersonal contexts. Recent efforts to operationalize this construct have provided more precise methods for identifying individual differences in identity instability and distinguishing clinically meaningful instability from the normative exploration associated with adolescence (Lechner, 2023). From a developmental perspective, identity coherence provides adolescents with an organizing framework through which emotional experiences, interpersonal relationships, motivations, and future aspirations can be integrated. Conversely, unstable identity may leave adolescents vulnerable to rapidly shifting affective states and interpersonal experiences, particularly when their self-evaluation depends excessively on external validation. Research across psychological domains increasingly demonstrates that self-related processes interact with broader emotional and motivational systems; for example, studies have examined the roles of self-esteem, psychological resources, motivation, grit, and self-evaluative processes in shaping adjustment and functioning (Almurumudhe et al., 2024; Torres et al., 2025). Similarly, work on self-objectification and appearance anxiety illustrates how externally oriented self-evaluation may become associated with distress during adolescence (Zhang et al., 2025). These findings reinforce the importance of considering the organization and stability of the self when examining adolescent psychological vulnerability.

Identity instability may be particularly important among adolescents who engage in self-injurious behavior. Non-suicidal self-injury generally refers to the intentional and direct destruction of one's own body tissue without suicidal intent and encompasses behaviors performed for a range of intrapersonal and interpersonal functions (Klonsky & Glenn, 2009). Self-injury is not adequately understood as an isolated behavioral symptom because it often occurs within a broader network of emotional distress, interpersonal difficulty, maladaptive self-processing, and psychopathology. Nock emphasized that self-injury represents a complex phenomenon with multiple determinants and functions, requiring explanatory models that incorporate both vulnerability processes and mechanisms that maintain the behavior (Nock, 2010). Among adolescents, self-injury may temporarily reduce overwhelming affect, communicate distress, interrupt dissociative or aversive internal experiences, punish the self, or restore a subjective sense of control. Consequently, studying the psychological organization underlying self-injury is essential for understanding why some adolescents repeatedly resort to bodily harm when confronting intense emotional or relational experiences.

Recent research has increasingly identified identity disturbance as one of the psychologically meaningful processes associated with adolescent self-injury. Identity diffusion and difficulties in mentalization have been linked with non-suicidal self-injury, suggesting that adolescents who lack a coherent and integrated representation of themselves and others may be more vulnerable to using self-injury when confronted with internal or interpersonal distress (Yenen Menderes & Çuhadaroğlu, 2025). This relationship is theoretically important because self-injury may both emerge from and further reinforce an unstable sense of self. Adolescents who struggle to identify and

KMAN-CPN KMAN-Counseling & Psychology Nexus
E-ISSN: 3041-9026

integrate contradictory aspects of themselves may experience interpersonal conflict and negative affect as threats to their entire identity rather than as transient experiences. Self-injury may consequently function as an immediate behavioral strategy for managing intolerable internal states, but recurrent reliance on such strategies can limit opportunities for developing more adaptive self-regulatory capacities. Educational and psychosocial perspectives likewise indicate that adolescent mental-health difficulties can extend beyond symptoms to influence educational participation, social functioning, adjustment, and developmental opportunities (Painter & Scannapieco, 2021). Thus, identity instability among adolescents with self-injurious behavior warrants investigation not only because of its clinical relevance but also because of its potentially broad developmental consequences.

One theoretically important framework for explaining identity instability is object relations theory. Object relations perspectives propose that psychological functioning is shaped by internalized representations of the self, significant others, and the emotional relationships connecting them. Through repeated interactions with caregivers and other important figures, individuals gradually develop internal relational templates that influence how they understand themselves, anticipate the behavior of others, interpret interpersonal experiences, and regulate affect. Kernberg emphasized that the integration of positive and negative self- and object representations is fundamental to the development of identity coherence, whereas poorly integrated and polarized representations contribute to identity diffusion, unstable relationships, and affective dysregulation (Kernberg, 1984). Contemporary developmental extensions of object relations theory have further emphasized the relevance of personality organization and self–other integration during adolescence, when personality structure remains developmentally dynamic but clinically significant patterns can already be identified (Normandin et al., 2023).

The quality of object relations may therefore constitute an important relational foundation for identity stability. When internalized representations of significant others are characterized by insecurity, alienation, rejection, inconsistency, or impaired interpersonal trust, adolescents may have difficulty constructing a stable self that remains coherent across changing emotional and relational circumstances. In such cases, self-perception may fluctuate according to immediate interpersonal feedback, perceived rejection, or changes in closeness and distance within relationships. Conversely, more integrated internal representations can provide psychological continuity even during conflict, separation, or emotional distress. Empirical research involving object relations has supported the broader relevance of relational representations to psychological functioning. For example, research examining object relations alongside reality testing and defense mechanisms has demonstrated the usefulness of relational and intrapsychic constructs for understanding psychological well-being (Poshtareh et al., 2024). Studies examining other complex psychosocial outcomes have similarly demonstrated that interpersonal-cognitive and regulatory mechanisms may mediate the relationship between foundational psychological capacities and later adjustment (Babaei et al., 2024). Such findings support the value of moving beyond simple bivariate associations and investigating the processes through which disturbed relational representations may translate into identity instability.

One potentially important mechanism connecting poor object relations to identity instability is mental pain. Mental pain has been conceptualized as an intensely aversive subjective state involving painful changes in the experience of self, feelings of emptiness, loss of control, emotional flooding, estrangement, helplessness, confusion, and perceived irreversibility (Orbach et al., 2003). Unlike physical pain, mental pain is rooted in the subjective experience of psychological suffering and often concerns perceived damage to, or disintegration of, the self. This feature makes mental pain particularly relevant to identity instability. When adolescents experience profound internal suffering, their capacity to maintain a continuous and coherent representation of themselves may be compromised. Experiences such as emptiness, emotional confusion, helplessness, and loss of control can directly challenge self-continuity and intensify uncertainty regarding personal identity. If an adolescent already possesses insecure or fragmented internal relational representations, stressful interpersonal experiences may be more likely to generate intense psychological pain because they activate fears of rejection, abandonment, worthlessness, or disconnection.

Mental pain is also closely relevant to self-injurious behavior. Adolescents may use self-injury as a means of transforming diffuse psychological suffering into a concrete physical sensation, reducing overwhelming affect, escaping intolerable internal experiences, or regaining a temporary sense of control. Evidence indicates that different patterns of psychological pain are associated with self-harm behaviors

KMAN-CPN KMAN-Counseling & Psychology Nexus
E-ISSN: 3041-9026

in adolescents, demonstrating that the subjective experience of suffering should be considered when attempting to understand the mechanisms underlying self-injury (Sun et al., 2022). From this perspective, mental pain may represent more than a correlate of self-harm; it may constitute an intermediate psychological process through which disturbed relational representations become associated with identity instability. Poor object relations may increase vulnerability to painful interpersonal interpretations and internal experiences, and intense mental pain may subsequently disrupt the adolescent's ability to sustain a stable sense of self. Accordingly, examining mental pain as a mediator may clarify why relational disturbances are associated with more pronounced identity instability in adolescents who already engage in self-injurious behavior.

A second mechanism that may explain the relationship between object relations and identity instability is difficulty in emotion regulation. Emotion regulation involves the processes through which individuals recognize, understand, tolerate, modify, and express emotional experiences in ways that are compatible with situational demands and longer-term goals. Difficulties in emotion regulation can include poor emotional awareness or clarity, nonacceptance of emotional states, impaired impulse control during distress, limited access to effective regulatory strategies, and difficulty engaging in goal-directed behavior when emotionally activated. Such difficulties are especially significant during adolescence because emotional reactivity increases while regulatory abilities and executive capacities continue to develop. Research across different populations has underscored the importance of emotional-regulation processes for psychological adaptation; interventions targeting emotional awareness and regulation have likewise been investigated as mechanisms for reducing psychological and somatic difficulties among younger populations (Bagheri Sheykhangafshe et al., 2024).

Emotion dysregulation is particularly prominent in research on adolescent self-injury. A systematic review of the relationship between emotion regulation and non-suicidal self-injury concluded that regulatory difficulties constitute a central psychological process associated with this behavior (Tolan & Dersuneli, 2024). Self-injury may provide rapid short-term relief from intense negative affect, which can negatively reinforce the behavior and make it more likely to recur when similar states arise. However, persistent dependence on self-injury may simultaneously reduce opportunities to develop more adaptive regulation strategies. Emotion dysregulation may also contribute directly to identity instability. When adolescents cannot differentiate, tolerate, and regulate emotional states, transient feelings may be interpreted as stable truths about the self. An adolescent who experiences rejection, anger, shame, or loneliness may consequently shift rapidly from one self-representation to another, making identity highly dependent on momentary affective states. In this way, emotional dysregulation may transform temporary emotional experiences into broader instability in self-definition.

Object relations theory provides a plausible developmental explanation for why emotion-regulation difficulties may emerge alongside unstable identity. Regulatory capacities develop within relationships in which emotional experiences are repeatedly recognized, interpreted, tolerated, and modulated. Through these experiences, external interpersonal regulation can gradually become internalized as the capacity for self-regulation. When relational experiences are inconsistent, rejecting, intrusive, or emotionally unavailable, adolescents may develop internal representations that provide fewer reliable resources for managing distress. Under such circumstances, intense affect may destabilize both interpersonal expectations and self-perception. Contemporary developmental approaches to personality pathology emphasize precisely this interconnectedness between relational representations, affect regulation, and identity organization (Normandin et al., 2023). Therefore, disturbed object relations may contribute to identity instability partly because they undermine the development of stable emotional-regulation capacities.

Importantly, mental pain and emotion-regulation difficulties represent related but conceptually distinct processes. Mental pain concerns the intensity and subjective meaning of psychological suffering, whereas emotion-regulation difficulties concern the individual's capacity to manage, tolerate, and organize emotional experiences. An adolescent may experience severe psychological pain yet possess relatively effective strategies for regulating it, or may demonstrate marked regulatory difficulties even when distress is comparatively moderate. Among adolescents engaging in self-injury, however, the combination of intense mental pain and limited emotion-regulation capacities may be especially destabilizing. Psychological suffering can threaten the coherence of self-experience, while ineffective regulation can prevent the adolescent from restoring emotional organization. Consequently, both processes may independently transmit the influence of disturbed object

KMAN-CPN KMAN-Counseling & Psychology Nexus
E-ISSN: 3041-9026

relations to unstable identity. This multiple-mechanism perspective is consistent with broader research demonstrating that psychological outcomes frequently emerge through interacting mediational processes rather than a single explanatory pathway (Almurumudhe et al., 2024; Babaei et al., 2024; Torres et al., 2025).

Recent evidence provides additional support for integrating identity, relational, and affect-regulatory processes in adolescents with self-harming behavior. A structural investigation of identity instability in adolescents with self-harming behaviors reported meaningful relationships among childhood relational experiences, object-relational functioning, emotion-regulation difficulties, and identity instability, highlighting the relevance of combining developmental and regulatory mechanisms within a unified explanatory model (Malekzadeh et al., 2026). At the same time, findings concerning adolescent self-injury indicate that identity-related dysfunction and psychopathology should be considered alongside emotional and relational processes rather than examined independently (Yenen Menderes & Çuhadaroğlu, 2025). Research on psychological pain further demonstrates the relevance of severe subjective suffering to adolescent self-harm (Sun et al., 2022), while systematic evidence regarding emotion regulation confirms that adolescents who engage in non-suicidal self-injury frequently experience difficulty understanding, tolerating, and regulating intense affective states (Tolan & Dersuneli, 2024). Together, these findings support an integrated relational-affective account of identity instability.

Despite these developments, an important explanatory gap remains. Much of the literature has examined self-injury in relation to emotion regulation, psychological distress, psychopathology, or identity disturbance individually, whereas fewer studies have specified how disturbances in internalized relationships may be connected to identity instability through distinct but simultaneous affective mechanisms. Identity instability itself has also received less empirical attention than broader constructs such as identity diffusion, despite recent advances in its measurement (Lechner, 2023). Furthermore, focusing specifically on adolescents who already engage in self-injurious behavior is important because relationships among object relations, mental pain, emotion regulation, and identity may differ in a population characterized by recurrent maladaptive responses to psychological distress. An integrated model can therefore offer greater explanatory precision by identifying not only whether poor object relations are associated with unstable identity but also how this association may operate through the adolescent's experience of psychological pain and capacity to regulate emotion.

Clarifying these pathways has substantial theoretical and clinical value. Theoretically, examining parallel mediation can connect developmental identity theory, object relations theory, and contemporary models of self-injury within a unified framework. Clinically, identifying different pathways may help distinguish adolescents whose identity instability is primarily linked to intense psychological suffering from those for whom regulatory deficits play a particularly important role, while recognizing that these mechanisms can coexist. Such differentiation may facilitate more comprehensive assessment and intervention planning that addresses relational representations, internal suffering, emotional skills, and identity organization rather than focusing exclusively on the observable act of self-injury. Considering the broader developmental consequences of adolescent psychological difficulties for social, personal, and educational functioning further strengthens the need for multidimensional explanatory models (Painter & Scannapieco, 2021). Likewise, evidence concerning self-evaluative vulnerability and psychological adjustment suggests that the organization of the self should be regarded as a central component of adolescent mental health rather than a secondary consequence of symptom severity (Zhang et al., 2025).

Accordingly, the aim of the present study was to predict identity instability based on the quality of object relations and to examine the mediating roles of mental pain and emotion regulation difficulties among adolescents with self-injurious behavior.

2. Methods and Materials

2.1. Study Design and Participants

A descriptive-correlational design was used. The statistical population comprised male and female students in public upper-secondary schools in Gonbad-e Kavus during the 2024-2025 academic year who had a history of self-injurious behavior. The final sample consisted of 310 adolescents. Cluster random sampling was used: public schools were stratified by sex, eight schools (four girls' schools and four boys' schools) were selected, and classes were randomly sampled across grades. Adolescents with self-injurious behavior were identified during screening, after which eligible and willing students completed the study measures.

KMAN-CPN KMAN-Counseling & Psychology Nexus
E-ISSN: 3041-9026

Following institutional and school-level permissions, the researcher coordinated data collection with school administrators and counselors. Eligible adolescents were informed about the purpose and procedures of the study, voluntary participation, confidentiality, and the option not to provide identifying information. Informed consent was obtained before questionnaire administration. Completed questionnaires were screened for missing, contradictory, or unusable responses before statistical analysis.

2.2. Data Collection Tools

Inventory of Statements About Self-Injury (ISAS). The ISAS was developed to assess the frequency and functions of intentional self-injury without suicidal intent. Its first section assesses 12 self-injury behaviors and its second section evaluates 13 functions of self-injury. The instrument has established psychometric support, and its function scales show acceptable internal consistency (Klonsky & Glenn, 2009). In the present study, the ISAS was used to identify adolescents with self-injurious behavior; Cronbach's alpha was .86.

Identity Instability Scale (IIS). The 21-item scale developed by Lechner assesses identity instability across two dimensions: self-disconnection and other-dependence. Items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale, with higher total scores indicating greater identity instability. The scale demonstrated acceptable internal consistency in the present sample (Cronbach's $\alpha = .88$). A recent psychometric study in adolescents with self-injurious behavior has also supported the use of the identity instability construct in this population (Malekzadeh et al., 2025).

Bell Object Relations Inventory (BORI). The object-relations form of the Bell inventory assesses four domains: alienation, insecure attachment, egocentricity, and social incompetence. The instrument was developed to quantify clinically meaningful dimensions of object relations and has demonstrated reliability and factorial stability (Bell et al., 1986). The 45-item object-relations form was used in this study. Higher scores were interpreted as greater disturbance, or poorer quality, in object relations. Cronbach's alpha in the present sample was .81.

Orbach and Mikulincer Mental Pain Scale (OMMP). The Persian version used in this study contained 44 items covering six domains of psychological pain, including loss of control, negative changes in the self, social isolation, helplessness, affective confusion, and emptiness/meaninglessness. Responses are provided on a 5-point scale, and higher scores indicate greater mental pain. The original mental-pain construct and measure were developed by Orbach and colleagues (Orbach et al., 2003). Cronbach's alpha in this sample was .80.

Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale-16 (DERS-16). The DERS-16 is a 16-item measure assessing emotional clarity, goal-directed behavior under distress, impulse-control difficulties, limited access to emotion-regulation strategies, and nonacceptance of emotional responses. Items are scored on a 5-point scale, with higher scores indicating greater emotion-regulation difficulty. The DERS-16 has demonstrated strong reliability and validity across clinical and community samples (Bjureberg et al., 2016). Cronbach's alpha in the present study was .82.

2.3. Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were calculated for demographic and study variables. Pearson correlations were used to examine bivariate associations. Path analysis was conducted using SPSS 26 and AMOS 18, with object relations as the focal predictor, identity instability as the outcome, and mental pain and emotion regulation difficulties as parallel mediators. The statistical assumptions relevant to multivariate analysis were examined, including normality, linearity, multicollinearity, and independence of residuals. Indirect effects were evaluated using bootstrapping, and statistical significance was set at $p < .05$.

3. Findings and Results

The sample included 310 adolescents. As shown in Table 1, 192 participants (61.9%) were girls and 118 (38.1%) were boys. Ages ranged from 16 to 19 years, with 18-year-olds representing the largest age group (35.5%).

Table 1

Demographic characteristics of the participants

Variable	Category	n	%
Sex	Girls	192	61.9
Sex	Boys	118	38.1

KMAN-CPN KMAN-Counseling & Psychology Nexus E-ISSN: 3041-9026

Age	16 years	90	29.0
Age	17 years	81	26.1
Age	18 years	110	35.5
Age	19 years	29	9.4

Descriptive statistics for the focal study variables are presented in Table 2. Mean object-relations disturbance was 33.84 (SD = 5.50), mean mental pain was 121.54 (SD = 36.45), mean emotion-regulation difficulty was 46.80 (SD = 13.13), and mean identity instability was 57.19 (SD = 14.03).

Table 2

Descriptive statistics for focal study variables

Variable	M	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Object relations disturbance	33.84	5.50	17	43
Mental pain	121.54	36.45	52	196
Emotion regulation difficulties	46.80	13.13	26	78
Identity instability	57.19	14.03	32	85

Pearson correlations are summarized in Table 3. Object-relational disturbance was positively associated with identity instability ($r = .474$, $p = .001$), mental pain ($r = .531$, $p < .001$), and emotion regulation difficulties ($r = .525$, $p < .001$). Identity instability showed its strongest bivariate association with mental pain ($r = .649$, $p < .001$), followed by emotion regulation difficulties ($r = .593$, $p < .001$). Mental pain and emotion regulation difficulties were also strongly correlated ($r = .729$, $p < .001$).

Table 3

Pearson correlations among focal study variables

Variable	1	2	3	4
1. Object relations disturbance	1			
2. Mental pain	.531***	1		
3. Emotion regulation difficulties	.525***	.729***	1	
4. Identity instability	.474**	.649***	.593***	1

Bootstrap analysis with 5,000 resamples was used to examine the indirect effects of negative meta-emotion and attachment insecurity through emotion-regulation difficulties. The indirect effect of negative meta-emotion on internalizing problems through emotion-regulation difficulties was statistically significant ($\beta = .19$, 95% CI [.14, .25]). The indirect effect of attachment insecurity on internalizing problems through emotion-regulation difficulties was also significant ($\beta = .17$, 95% CI [.12, .22]). Similarly, negative meta-emotion showed a significant indirect association with externalizing problems through emotion-regulation difficulties ($\beta = .13$, 95% CI [.09, .18]). The indirect effect of attachment insecurity on externalizing problems through emotion-regulation difficulties was significant as well ($\beta = .11$, 95% CI [.07, .16]). Because none of the bootstrap confidence intervals included zero, all four indirect effects were statistically significant.

The total standardized effect of negative meta-emotion on internalizing problems was .43, while the total effect of attachment insecurity on internalizing problems was .36. For externalizing problems, the corresponding total effects were .31 for negative meta-emotion and .33 for attachment insecurity. The persistence of significant direct effects after inclusion of emotion-regulation difficulties indicated partial rather than complete statistical mediation.

Overall, the structural model supported the hypothesized relationships. Higher negative meta-emotion and greater attachment insecurity were associated with greater difficulties in emotion regulation. Emotion-regulation difficulties were subsequently associated with both internalizing and externalizing problems. Emotion regulation significantly accounted for part of the relationship between both predictor variables and adolescents' emotional and behavioral problems. The indirect pathways were stronger for internalizing than externalizing problems,

KMAN-CPN KMAN-Counseling & Psychology Nexus
E-ISSN: 3041-9026

suggesting that emotion-regulation difficulties may play a particularly important role in explaining emotional symptoms such as anxiety, depression, and withdrawal. The final model explained 43% of the variance in emotion-regulation difficulties, 52% of the variance in internalizing problems, and 34% of the variance in externalizing problems.

The focal path estimates are presented in Table 4. Object-relational disturbance significantly predicted identity instability (β = .152, p = .028), mental pain (β = .524, p < .001), and emotion regulation difficulties (β = .543, p < .001). In turn, mental pain significantly predicted identity instability (β = .497, p < .001), and emotion regulation difficulties had an additional significant positive effect (β = .175, p = .010). Mental pain showed the strongest direct association with identity instability among the focal predictors.

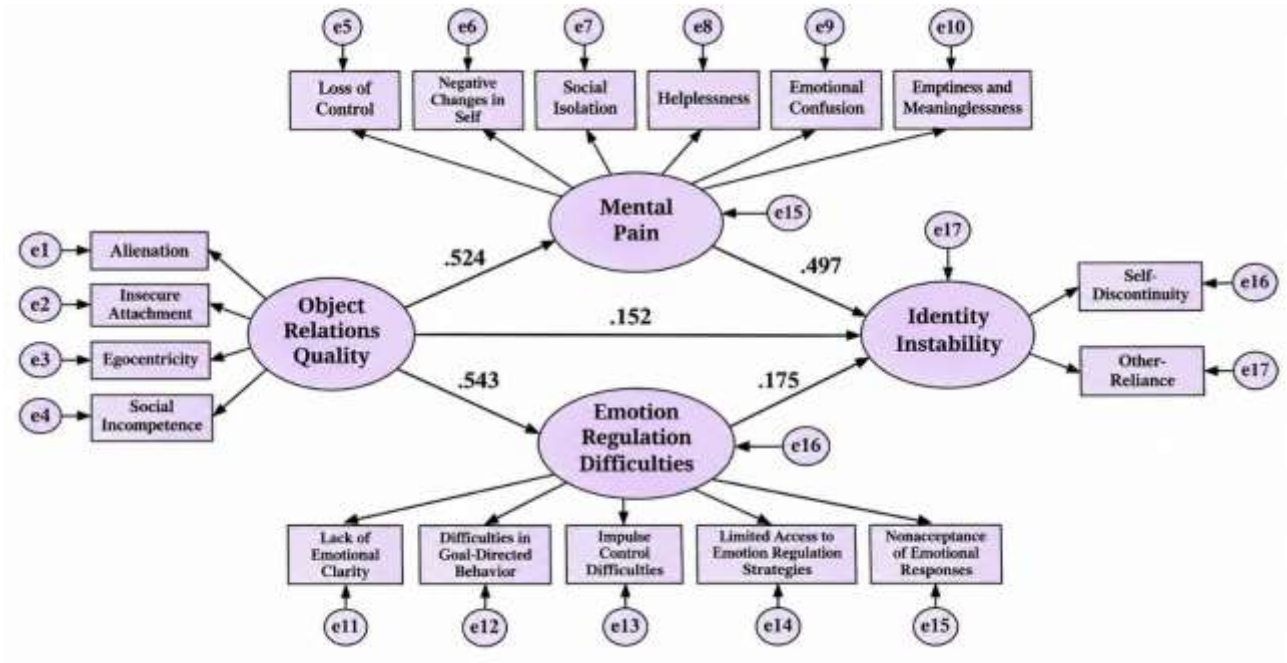
Table 4

Direct path coefficients in the focal mediation model

Path	β	B	SE	t	p
Object relations → Identity instability	.152	1.29	.583	2.21	.028
Object relations → Mental pain	.524	5.98	.934	6.40	< .001
Object relations → Emotion regulation difficulties	.543	1.25	.196	6.37	< .001
Mental pain → Identity instability	.497	.370	.054	6.91	< .001
Emotion regulation difficulties → Identity instability	.175	.644	.249	2.58	.010

Figure 1

Standardized structural model of identity instability based on object relations quality, with the mediating roles of mental pain and emotion regulation difficulties.



Bootstrap mediation analyses are reported in Table 5. The indirect effect of object-relational disturbance on identity instability through mental pain was significant (β = .234, 95% CI [.143, .347], p = .008). A second significant indirect effect occurred through emotion regulation difficulties (β = .187, 95% CI [.097, .303], p = .007). Because neither confidence interval included zero, both mediators were supported. The direct object-relations path remained significant, indicating partial rather than complete mediation.

KMAN-CPN KMAN-Counseling & Psychology Nexus
E-ISSN: 3041-9026

Table 5

Bootstrap indirect effects of object relations on identity instability

Indirect pathway	β	SE	95% CI	p
Object relations → Mental pain → Identity instability	.234	.052	[.143, .347]	.008
Object relations → Emotion regulation difficulties → Identity instability	.187	.054	[.097, .303]	.007

4. Discussion

The findings of the present study showed that poorer quality of object relations was significantly associated with greater identity instability among adolescents with self-injurious behavior and that this relationship operated both directly and indirectly through mental pain and difficulties in emotion regulation. At the bivariate level, object-relational disturbance was positively correlated with identity instability (r = .474), mental pain (r = .531), and emotion regulation difficulties (r = .525). Identity instability also showed significant positive associations with mental pain (r = .649) and emotion regulation difficulties (r = .593), while mental pain and emotion regulation difficulties were strongly related to one another (r = .729). The structural model further indicated that object-relational disturbance directly predicted identity instability (β = .152, p = .028), mental pain (β = .524, p < .001), and emotion regulation difficulties (β = .543, p < .001). Mental pain emerged as the strongest direct predictor of identity instability (β = .497, p < .001), while emotion regulation difficulties also had a significant independent effect (β = .175, p = .010). In addition, the indirect effect of object-relational disturbance on identity instability through mental pain was significant (β = .234, 95% CI [.143, .347]), as was the indirect effect through emotion regulation difficulties (β = .187, 95% CI [.097, .303]). Because the direct pathway remained significant after inclusion of the mediators, the results supported partial rather than complete mediation. Overall, the findings indicate that identity instability among adolescents who engage in self-injurious behavior is related not only to disturbed internalized relational representations but also to the affective suffering and regulatory difficulties through which these relational disturbances are expressed.

The direct relationship between object-relational disturbance and identity instability is consistent with developmental and psychodynamic conceptualizations of identity formation. Erikson proposed that adolescence is a critical period for integrating earlier identifications, interpersonal experiences, personal values, and future commitments into a coherent identity (Erikson, 1968). When internal experiences and interpersonal relationships cannot be incorporated into a stable and continuous representation of the self, the adolescent may experience uncertainty, fragmentation, and role confusion. From an object relations perspective, Kernberg similarly emphasized that a stable identity depends on the integration of positive and negative representations of the self and significant others; when such representations remain fragmented, polarized, or poorly integrated, identity diffusion and instability are more likely to occur (Kernberg, 1984). The present finding that poorer object relations predicted identity instability therefore supports the view that the organization of internal self–other representations constitutes an important psychological foundation for identity coherence.

This interpretation is also compatible with contemporary extensions of object relations theory to adolescent development. Normandin and colleagues emphasized that personality organization in adolescence should be understood through an integrated developmental framework in which identity integration, representations of self and others, defensive functioning, and affect regulation are closely interconnected (Normandin et al., 2023). From this perspective, adolescents who internalize relationships as unsafe, inconsistent, rejecting, or emotionally unreliable may have difficulty maintaining stable self-representations across changing interpersonal contexts. Their evaluations of themselves may become highly contingent on the perceived availability, approval, or rejection of others. This process is particularly relevant to identity instability because one component of unstable identity involves dependence on others for self-definition. The findings are also consistent with research demonstrating relationships between object relations and broader psychological functioning. Poshtareh and colleagues reported that object relations and reality testing were meaningfully related to psychological well-being through intrapsychic mechanisms, illustrating the importance of relational representations in psychological adaptation (Poshtareh et al., 2024). The present study extends this general relational framework to identity instability in adolescents who engage in self-injury.

KMAN-CPN KMAN-Counseling & Psychology Nexus
E-ISSN: 3041-9026

The significant association between identity instability and self-injurious behavior can also be interpreted in light of previous findings on identity disturbance in adolescents. Yenen Menderes and Çuhadaroğlu found that identity diffusion, together with mentalization difficulties and psychopathology, was significantly implicated in nonsuicidal self-injury among adolescents (Yenen Menderes & Çuhadaroğlu, 2025). Their findings support the assumption that self-injury cannot be adequately explained solely through behavioral or symptomatic variables and that disturbances in the organization of identity are central to understanding vulnerability to self-harm. When adolescents possess unstable self-representations, distressing interpersonal experiences may produce disproportionately intense disruptions in self-evaluation, and self-injury may serve as an attempt to regulate these disruptions, restore a subjective sense of control, or externalize internal suffering. This interpretation is compatible with Nock's conceptualization of self-injury as a multidetermined behavior that may be maintained through affective, cognitive, interpersonal, and reinforcement processes (Nock, 2010). It also corresponds with the functional approach reflected in the Inventory of Statements About Self-Injury, which conceptualizes self-injury as serving several intrapersonal and interpersonal functions rather than representing a unitary phenomenon (Klonsky & Glenn, 2009).

The present findings further indicated that mental pain was the strongest proximal predictor of identity instability and carried the larger of the two significant indirect effects. This result suggests that psychological suffering may constitute a particularly important mechanism linking disturbed relational representations to unstable identity. Orbach and colleagues conceptualized mental pain as a multidimensional experience involving perceived negative changes in the self, loss of control, emotional flooding, estrangement, confusion, helplessness, emptiness, and meaninglessness (Orbach et al., 2003). Several of these dimensions directly concern the individual's relationship with the self, and therefore severe mental pain may undermine the continuity and coherence required for stable identity. An adolescent experiencing emptiness, self-alienation, emotional confusion, and loss of control may have difficulty preserving a consistent sense of who they are across time and circumstances. Thus, the relatively strong effect of mental pain on identity instability is theoretically understandable because psychological pain may directly destabilize self-experience.

The mediating role of mental pain is also consistent with evidence linking psychological pain to adolescent self-harm. Sun and colleagues identified meaningful patterns of psychological pain among adolescents engaging in self-harm and demonstrated that psychological pain is closely connected to self-harming behavior (Sun et al., 2022). In adolescents with disturbed object relations, interpersonal experiences such as perceived rejection, abandonment, criticism, or relational insecurity may activate internalized negative representations and produce severe psychological suffering. When this suffering becomes difficult to tolerate, the adolescent may experience greater fragmentation in self-perception and may use self-injury as a means of regulating or expressing internal pain. Accordingly, mental pain may be understood as a bridge between relational disturbance and unstable identity: disturbed object relations increase vulnerability to painful internal experiences, and those experiences then interfere with the adolescent's ability to maintain an integrated and continuous sense of self.

The results are also aligned with the recent structural model reported by Malekzadeh and colleagues, in which identity instability among adolescents with self-harming behaviors was explained through object relations, developmental adversity, and difficulties in emotion regulation (Malekzadeh et al., 2026). That study similarly emphasized that identity instability should be understood through interacting relational and affective mechanisms rather than as an isolated developmental phenomenon. The present findings build on this line of research by specifically demonstrating that mental pain provides an additional significant pathway through which object-relational disturbance is associated with identity instability. Together, these findings suggest that relational vulnerability may be transformed into identity disturbance through multiple internal processes, including both the intensity of psychological suffering and the individual's capacity to regulate emotional experience.

The second significant mediating pathway involved difficulties in emotion regulation. Object-relational disturbance strongly predicted emotion regulation difficulties, which in turn significantly predicted identity instability. This finding is consistent with developmental models suggesting that emotion regulation capacities are initially developed within interpersonal relationships. Caregivers and significant others help children identify, label, tolerate, and modulate emotional experiences; over time, these externally supported regulatory processes become increasingly internalized. When relationships are

KMAN-CPN KMAN-Counseling & Psychology Nexus
E-ISSN: 3041-9026

experienced as inconsistent, rejecting, frightening, or emotionally unavailable, the developing individual may acquire fewer stable internal resources for regulating distress. Within object relations theory, this impaired internalization may produce both affective dysregulation and instability in self–other representations (Kernberg, 1984; Normandin et al., 2023). The present findings therefore suggest that one reason poor object relations are associated with unstable identity is that they may compromise the emotional regulatory processes needed to maintain continuity of the self under conditions of stress.

The significant relationship between emotion regulation difficulties and identity instability can also be explained by the influence of affective states on self-evaluation. When adolescents have difficulty understanding, accepting, or modifying their emotions, transient states of anger, shame, sadness, loneliness, or anxiety may exert disproportionate effects on self-perception. Rather than experiencing emotions as temporary internal events, adolescents with poor regulatory capacities may incorporate them into global judgments of the self. Consequently, momentary emotional changes may lead to rapid shifts in values, goals, interpersonal positioning, and self-definition. This interpretation is consistent with the systematic review by Tolan and Dersuneli, which concluded that emotion-regulation difficulties are consistently associated with nonsuicidal self-injury among adolescents (Tolan & Dersuneli, 2024). Their findings support the view that self-injury frequently functions as an attempt to modulate intense affect when more adaptive regulatory strategies are unavailable or ineffective.

Evidence from intervention research also supports the broader importance of emotional regulation in child and adolescent psychological functioning. Bagheri Sheykhangafshe and colleagues demonstrated that mindfulness-based cognitive therapy was effective in improving emotional regulation alongside other psychological outcomes in children, supporting the clinical relevance and modifiability of emotion-regulatory processes (Bagheri Sheykhangafshe et al., 2024). Although that study involved a different population, it reinforces the broader proposition that emotion regulation constitutes a central mechanism through which psychological adaptation can be strengthened. In adolescents with self-injurious behavior, enhancing emotional awareness, acceptance, impulse control, and access to adaptive regulation strategies may therefore help reduce the extent to which fluctuating affective states destabilize identity.

The simultaneous significance of mental pain and emotion regulation difficulties is especially noteworthy because these constructs are related but theoretically distinguishable. Mental pain reflects the subjective intensity and meaning of suffering, whereas emotion regulation difficulties concern the adolescent's capacity to manage that suffering. The strong correlation between the two variables observed in the present study indicates that severe psychological pain often coexists with limited regulatory capacity, but their independent effects on identity instability suggest that they represent different psychological mechanisms. This pattern supports a multimechanism model in which disturbed relational representations can increase both the amount of psychological pain an adolescent experiences and the difficulty the adolescent has in regulating that experience. These processes then jointly undermine identity stability.

Such a multimechanism interpretation is consistent with research demonstrating the value of mediation models in explaining complex adolescent and psychological outcomes. Almurumudhe and colleagues showed that self-esteem can mediate relationships among psychological capital, academic engagement, procrastination, and performance, demonstrating that self-related variables can transmit the effects of broader psychological factors on adjustment (Almurumudhe et al., 2024). Babaei and colleagues similarly demonstrated a mediating role for theory of mind in the relationship between executive functions and marital burnout, illustrating how intermediary cognitive-affective mechanisms can clarify associations between more distal psychological characteristics and complex outcomes (Babaei et al., 2024). Torres and colleagues also examined motivation through a mediated framework involving locus of control and grit, supporting the usefulness of indirect-effect models in explaining how psychological resources translate into behavioral and motivational outcomes (Torres et al., 2025). Although these studies addressed different populations and variables, they collectively support an explanatory approach in which distal psychological factors influence outcomes through identifiable intermediary mechanisms rather than through direct relationships alone.

The findings may also be considered in relation to broader processes of externally contingent self-evaluation during adolescence. Zhang and colleagues reported that self-objectification was related to adolescent appearance anxiety through mediated and moderated mechanisms, demonstrating how externally focused self-evaluation can contribute to emotional vulnerability (Zhang et al., 2025).

KMAN-CPN KMAN-Counseling & Psychology Nexus
E-ISSN: 3041-9026

This finding is relevant to identity instability because adolescents whose self-definition depends heavily on external judgments may be particularly susceptible to changes in interpersonal feedback. Disturbed object relations may amplify this vulnerability by fostering expectations of rejection, insecurity, or inconsistency in relationships. Under these conditions, external evaluations may become disproportionately important to self-definition, making identity more unstable and susceptible to fluctuations in relational circumstances.

The findings also have implications for understanding the broader developmental consequences of psychological distress in adolescents. Painter and Scannapieco emphasized that mental-health difficulties among children and adolescents may affect educational adjustment, social participation, and developmental functioning beyond the presence of specific psychiatric symptoms (Painter & Scannapieco, 2021). Identity instability may therefore have consequences extending beyond self-injury itself, potentially influencing peer relationships, school engagement, decision-making, future orientation, and the development of stable interpersonal commitments. This broader perspective reinforces the importance of identifying the relational and emotional mechanisms associated with identity instability before these patterns become more deeply consolidated.

5. Conclusion

Taken together, the present findings support an integrated relational-affective model of identity instability among adolescents with self-injurious behavior. Poorer object relations appear to constitute a relatively distal vulnerability associated with fragmented or insecure representations of self and others, while mental pain and emotion-regulation difficulties represent more proximal mechanisms through which this vulnerability may be translated into unstable identity. The stronger predictive role of mental pain suggests that the subjective experience of psychological suffering is especially relevant to instability in the self, whereas the additional contribution of emotion dysregulation demonstrates that the capacity to manage this suffering is independently important. The persistence of the direct object-relations pathway after inclusion of both mediators further indicates that mental pain and emotion regulation do not fully explain the association. Other mechanisms, such as mentalization, attachment insecurity, defensive functioning, self-esteem, interpersonal sensitivity, or developmental trauma, may also contribute to the pathway from relational disturbance to identity instability (Malekzadeh et al., 2026; Normandin et al., 2023; Poshtareh et al., 2024; Yenen Menderes & Çuhadaroğlu, 2025). Overall, the results emphasize that identity instability in adolescents who self-injure should not be conceptualized as an isolated characteristic but as a developmental outcome embedded in the interaction of internalized relationships, psychological pain, and emotional regulation.

The present study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the descriptive-correlational and cross-sectional design does not permit definitive conclusions regarding causal or temporal relationships among object relations, mental pain, emotion regulation difficulties, and identity instability. Although the proposed model was theoretically grounded, alternative directional relationships remain possible. Second, all principal variables were assessed through self-report instruments, which may increase shared-method variance and make the findings susceptible to recall bias, social desirability, response style, and participants' emotional state at the time of assessment. Third, the sample was drawn from public upper-secondary schools in a single geographic area, which limits the generalizability of the findings to adolescents from other cities, cultures, socioeconomic backgrounds, clinical settings, or educational systems. Fourth, the study included adolescents who had already been identified as engaging in self-injurious behavior and did not include a matched comparison group without self-injury, limiting conclusions regarding whether the observed pathways are specific to self-injuring adolescents. Fifth, potentially important covariates such as severity and frequency of self-injury, psychiatric symptoms, family functioning, attachment patterns, childhood adversity, peer relationships, and socioeconomic status were not simultaneously modeled. Finally, the strong relationship between mental pain and emotion regulation difficulties suggests conceptual overlap that should be carefully examined in future research using more differentiated measurement and longitudinal designs.

Future studies should use longitudinal and prospective designs to determine the temporal ordering of disturbances in object relations, mental pain, emotion regulation difficulties, and identity instability and to examine whether changes in these processes predict subsequent changes in self-injurious behavior. Research should also recruit adolescents from multiple regions, clinical and nonclinical settings, diverse socioeconomic groups, and different

KMAN-CPN KMAN-Counseling & Psychology Nexus
E-ISSN: 3041-9026

cultural contexts to improve generalizability. Including comparison groups of adolescents without self-injury would help determine whether the identified pathways are specific to self-injurious populations or reflect broader mechanisms of adolescent identity development. Future studies could incorporate parent, teacher, and clinician reports alongside self-report measures and use structured clinical interviews, ecological momentary assessment, or behavioral indices to reduce shared-method bias. More complex structural models should examine additional mediators and moderators, including attachment insecurity, mentalization, self-esteem, defensive functioning, childhood trauma, interpersonal sensitivity, social support, and severity of psychopathology. It would also be useful to distinguish different forms, frequencies, and functions of self-injury and test whether the structural relationships differ according to the motives underlying self-harm. Finally, intervention and longitudinal mediation studies are needed to determine whether improvements in relational functioning, reductions in mental pain, or strengthening of emotion-regulation capacities are followed by measurable increases in identity stability.

In practice, professionals working with adolescents who engage in self-injurious behavior should assess more than the frequency or physical severity of self-harm. Psychological assessment should also include the adolescent's internal representations of relationships, experiences of rejection or interpersonal insecurity, level of mental pain, capacity to recognize and regulate emotions, and stability of self-definition. Intervention programs may benefit from combining relationally oriented psychotherapy with strategies designed to reduce psychological suffering and strengthen emotion-regulation skills. Clinicians should help adolescents identify recurring interpersonal expectations, integrate conflicting self- and other-representations, recognize and verbalize painful internal experiences, and develop alternatives to self-injury for managing intense affect. School counselors and mental-health professionals should also be trained to recognize signs of identity instability, severe psychological pain, and emotion dysregulation as clinically relevant warning indicators rather than focusing only on visible self-injury. Coordinated intervention involving families, schools, and mental-health services may be particularly useful when relational insecurity and emotional dysregulation are persistent. Preventive programs that strengthen secure relationships, emotional literacy, distress tolerance, self-reflection, and coherent self-understanding may ultimately reduce adolescents' reliance on self-injury and support healthier identity development.

Authors' Contributions

Authors equally contributed to this article.

Declaration

In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

Transparency Statement

Data are available for research purposes upon reasonable request to the corresponding author.

Acknowledgments

We would like to express our gratitude to all individuals helped us to do the project.

Declaration of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

Funding

According to the authors, this article has no financial support.

Ethical Considerations

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

References

Almurumudhe, L. K. A., Mahdad, A., Abdulkadhim Johni, A., & Yousefi, Z. (2024). The Mediating Role of Self-Esteem in the Relationship between Psychological Capital, Academic Engagement, and Academic Procrastination with Academic Performance among Students in Al-Diwaniyah, Iraq [Research Article]. *Iranian Journal of Educational Sociology*, *7*(3), 1-9. https://doi.org/10.61838/kman.ijes.7.3.1

Babaei, F., Abdollahi, M., Amini Gilvani, M., & Masoomifard, M. (2024). The Mediating Role of Theory of Mind in the Relationship Between Executive Functions and Marital Burnout Using Structural Equation Modeling and Artificial Neural Networks (SEM-ANN). *International Journal of Education and Cognitive Sciences*, *5*(4), 62-73. https://doi.org/10.61838/kman.ijecs.5.4.7

Bagheri Sheykhangafshe, F., Abbaspour, A., Savabi Niri, V., Bikas Yekani, M., & Keramati, S. (2024). The effectiveness of mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT) on alexithymia, pain intensity, and emotional regulation in children with

KMAN-CPN KMAN-Counseling & Psychology Nexus
E-ISSN: 3041-9026

irritable bowel syndrome. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Mental Health*, *11*(2), 6. https://doi.org/10.61186/jcmh.11.2.7

Erikson, E. H. (1968). *Identity: Youth and crisis*. W. W. Norton.

Kernberg, O. F. (1984). *Severe personality disorders: Psychotherapeutic strategies*. Yale University Press.

Klonsky, E. D., & Glenn, C. R. (2009). Assessing the functions of non-suicidal self-injury: Psychometric properties of the Inventory of Statements About Self-Injury (ISAS). *Journal of psychopathology and behavioral assessment*, *31*(3), 215-219. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10862-008-9107-z

Lechner, C. A. (2023). *Development and validation of the Identity Instability Scale* Alliant International University].

Malekzadeh, F. Z., Mohammadipour, M., & Jajarmi, M. (2026). Structural Model of Identity Instability Based on Object Relations and Childhood Trauma with the Mediating Role of Difficulties in Emotion Regulation in Adolescents with Self-Harming Behaviors. *Iranian Journal of Neurodevelopmental Disorders*, *5*(3), 1-10. https://maherpub.com/index.php/jndd/article/view/762

Nock, M. K. (2010). Self-injury. *Annual Review of Clinical Psychology*, *6*, 339-363. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.clinpsy.121208.131258

Normandin, L., Weiner, A., & Ensink, K. (2023). An Integrated Developmental Approach to Personality Disorders in Adolescence: Expanding Kernberg's Object Relations Theory. *American Journal of Psychotherapy*, *76*(1), 9-14. https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.psychotherapy.20220023

Orbach, I., Mikulincer, M., Sirota, P., & Gilboa-Schechtman, E. (2003). Mental pain: A multidimensional operationalization and definition. *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior*, *33*(3), 219-230. https://doi.org/10.1521/suli.33.3.219.23219

Painter, K., & Scannapieco, M. (2021). Children and Adolescents With Mental Illness and the Education System. https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780190927844.003.0018

Poshtareh, S., Ebrahimi Moghadam, H., Moradi, H., & allah. (2024). Modeling the Relationship Between Reality Testing and Object Relations with Psychological Well-being Through the Mediation of Defense Mechanisms in Grief Disorder. *Journal of Adolescent and Youth Psychological Studies (JAYPS)*, *5*(3), 147-158. https://doi.org/10.61838/kman.jayps.5.3.16

Sun, F., Li, H., Song, W., Bao, J., & Zhen, Z. (2022). Patterns of psychological pain and self-harm behaviors in adolescents. *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior*, *52*(5), 1012-1023. https://doi.org/10.1111/sltb.12898

Tolan, Ö. Ç., & Dersuneli, Y. (2024). Examining the relationships between emotion regulation and non-suicidal self-injury behavior in adolescents: A systematic review. *Turkish Journal of Child and Adolescent Mental Health*, *31*(2), 110-122. https://doi.org/10.4274/tjcamh.galenos.2022.74936

Torres, J., Chen, D., & Peixoto, B. (2025). Locus of Control and Its Relationship with Motivation: Mediated by Grit. *Journal of Adolescent and Youth Psychological Studies (JAYPS)*. https://doi.org/10.61838/

Yenen Menderes, A. S., & Çuhadaroğlu, F. (2025). Impact of mentalization, identity diffusion and psychopathology on nonsuicidal self-injury among adolescents. *Journal of adolescence*, *97*(2), 357-368. https://doi.org/10.1002/jad.12422

Zhang, H., Li, H., Jiang, C., Tu, Y., & Xi, M. (2025). The Relationship Between Self-Objectification and Adolescent Appearance Anxiety: A Mediated Model With Moderation. *Actas espanolas de psiquiatria*, *53*(2), 359-365. https://doi.org/10.62641/aep.v53i2.1742

KMAN-CPN KMAN-Counseling & Psychology Nexus
E-ISSN: 3041-9026