

Abstract

The biosocial theory maintains that emotion dysregulation, which is operationalized as high in emotion vulnerability and low in emotion modulation ability, is the primary problem in borderline personality disorder. The present study examined how high emotion vulnerability and low emotion modulation may be related to the development of BPD features among Chinese adolescents in Hong Kong. The sample consisted of 3425 female and 2036 male adolescents, with age ranged from 12 to 21, from five secondary schools in Hong Kong. Subject completed measures assessing emotion vulnerability, emotion modulation, sense of identity, interpersonal disturbances, impulsive behaviors, deliberate self-harm, overall BPD symptoms, and depression. Factor analyses and reliability analyses supported the construct validities of emotion vulnerability and emotion modulation. Hierarchical multiple regression analyses showed that emotion vulnerability and emotion modulation significantly predicted various BPD features and overall BPD pathology even when depressive state was controlled for. Logistic regression analyses supported that emotion vulnerability and emotion modulation deficit significantly increased the odds of being classified as a BPD case. Findings also revealed moderating effect of emotion modulation on the impact of emotion vulnerability on BPD symptomatology. More studies exploring specific parameters of emotional functioning among BPD individuals were recommended.