

Abstract

Self-Determination Theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 1980; Ryan & Deci, 2017) posits that the satisfaction of basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness promotes adaptive self-regulation and adjustment across major developmental eras, including adolescence. This symposium will showcase four recent SDT-guided investigations (three from Europe and one from the United States) that considered the influences of intrapersonal and relational variables on adaptive and maladaptive aspects of self-regulation and adjustment within mid- and late-adolescent samples. The first presentation (Costa et al.) gathered data from Italian adolescents (age range = 13 – 18 years) and from their biological fathers and mothers that demonstrated support for an SDT model wherein parental psychological control both directly and indirectly mediated the transmission of emotion dysregulation from parents to their adolescent offspring. The second presentation (Reinhardt et al.) will report findings from a study of Hungarian juvenile delinquents (M age = 17 years) that identified homogeneous subgroups with different patterns of non-suicidal self-injury (NSSI) and considers how SDT needs for relatedness and autonomy can enhance understanding the risk for, and treatment of, NSSI. The third presentation (Loscalzo & Giannini) will discuss how SDT needs can be applied to understanding findings from a study of 350 Italian adolescent secondary school students (M age = 16.4 years) that measured their GPAs, time spent studying, dropout intention, and studyholism (i.e., obsessional studying). Lastly, the final presentation (Lopez/Rice) will summarize findings from three sequential studies testing hypothesized pathways linking adolescent personality variables (perfectionism, adult attachment orientations), SDT need satisfactions and frustrations, and several identity-related self-perceptions to authentic/autonomous self-functioning within samples of late adolescent U.S. college students (age range = 18-22).