Grandparent Affection and Emotional Well-being of Adolescents with Different Family Types

Pilar Ramos[1] , Carmen Moreno[1], Sara Luna[1], and Francisco Rivera[2]

Abstract

Despite the increasing importance of grandparents in raising their grandchildren, few studies analyze the impact that these intergenerational relationships have on the grandchildren, especially during adolescence. With a sample of 3432 adolescents between 11 years and 16 years old, we analyze to what degree grandparent affection explains adolescent emotional well-being. The results reveal interesting findings according to family type: traditional two-parent families, families with joint custody, or families with only one biological parent (specifying between father or mother). Lastly, we analyze and discuss the implications of the relevant results related to the grandparents' sex, lineage, and state of health, the adolescent's age, as well as finding a higher impact of grandparent affection has on adolescents from families with only the father as a reference figure. This study advocates for reinforcing the role of the grandparents during adolescence, becoming especially relevant for boys and girls living in father-only families.

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Introduction

In light of current demographical changes and the *verticalization of family structure*, research has recently begun to highlight the relevance of the grandparent-grandchild relationship (Meil, 2006). However, despite the proven benefits that the relation with grandchildren has for grandparents (Kim et al., 2017; Walsh, 2012), there is little research regarding the impact of this relationship on the grandchildren's development (Kirby, 2015).

Hebblethwaite and Norris (2010) demonstrate that a higher frequency of contact between grandparents and grandchildren strengthens the relationship between them. However, the onset of adolescence is accompanied by various transitions that lead them to engage in new relationships and contexts, dedicating less time and attention to family connections, and more specifically to the relationship with their grandparents (Creasey & Koblewsky, 1991; Peterson & Bush, 2013). Although adolescent social relationships change, research has demonstrated that family relationships continue to be fundamental for adolescent development (Engels et al., 2001). Just like the parental relationship, we can assume that this deterioration may only occur in more superficial aspects of the relationship, such as the frequency of contact or shared activities, whereas the affective aspects of the relationship (such as closeness or the importance attributed to the relationship) remain relatively intact. In fact, it seems that the grandparents notice this relationship deterioration more than the grandchildren (Villar et al., 2010).

Research has demonstrated the positive contribution that grandparents make to their grandchildren's development (Attar-Schwartz, 2015; Ruiz & Silverstein, 2007; Yorgason et al., 2011). For example, in a study of approximately 1,500 adolescents between 11 years and 16 years old, grandparent participation was related to fewer emotional difficulties and more pro-social behavior in their adolescent grandchildren (Attar-Schwartz et al., 2009). In a systematic review conducted by Coall and Hertwig (2010) the authors reiterate the fact that grandparents have a beneficial influence on their grandchildren's successful development; however they add that the benefits are more noticeable in grandchildren from non-traditional family structures.

Nevertheless, according to the intergenerational ambivalence model (Luescher & Pillemer, 1998), the relations between generations in families are organized in such a way that they generate different types of

ambivalence, especially when their members are adults. By extending this theory to the intergenerational relationships of grandparents and their grandchildren, ambivalence is evidenced because of the implementation of two rules that are basically contradictory: an obligation to support and another to non-interference. On the one hand, the first rule assumes that grandparents have to support their children and their grandchildren (which Bates & Taylor, 2013, p. 65, call "avial obligation"). The second rule is the obligation of non-interference and it refers to the expectation of the intermediate and higher generation that the authority in the nuclear family regarding the children lies with the intermediate generation. So the *non-interference norm* refers to the mother, father, and grandparents' assumption that the latters' authority over the grandchildren is contingent upon solicitation by their children (intermediate generation); that is, the grandparents should abstain from interfering unless they are asked.

In this regard, Cherlin and Furstenberg (1986) defend the *latent function hypothesis* according to which the grandparents assume a relatively passive and non-interventionist role in their grandchildren and adult children's life when the family dynamics in the intermediate generation function normally. However, when this does not occur, the grandparents increase their level of intervention. The longitudinal study by Clingempeel et al. (1992) found empirical evidence to support this hypothesis, especially in monoparental families. Ultimately, it appears that the grandparent relationship could be one of the most stable and relevant relationships in the life of grandchildren from families with only one biological parent (e.g., Ruiz & Silverstein, 2007).

In addition to the aforementioned regarding the importance of the grandparent-grandchild relationship—especially in non-traditional family structures–various factors that could moderate the grandparent-grandchild relationship should be taken into consideration. Factors such as sex and age (of both the grandparents and grandchild), lineage (maternal or paternal), or the grandparent's state of health stand out (Harper, 2003; Noriega & Velasco, 2013); aspects that should be taken into account in this type of intergenerational research.

Previous literature indicates that grandmothers are more involved and more committed to the role of grandparent than grandfathers (Reitzes & Mutran, 2004), which may stem from the greater contribution of women to the maintenance of kinship relations, as it has been suggested by Bates (2009). In fact, classic studies already indicated that the most intense relationships are those established between grandmothers and granddaughters, that is, between the two women of the grandparent-grandchild dyads (e.g., Roberto & Stroes, 1992). Likewise, this gender focus is also found in the

greater involvement of grandparents of maternal lineage compared to paternal grandparents (Coall & Hertwig, 2010).

Regarding age, the greater longevity of grandparents causes them to live with their grandchildren at the end of their childhood and their development during the adolescent and even adult stage. However, some research points to a worsening of the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren as they both turn older, since teenage grandchildren would be increasingly interested in other social contexts (Creasey & Koblewsky, 1991; Peterson & Bush, 2013). Furthermore, the correlation between age and worsening health status in old age cannot be forgotten, which could also influence the way grandparents relate to their grandchildren (Even-Zohar & Sharlin, 2009; Hoff, 2007).

Thus, the objectives of this study are (a) to find out what variables related to the adolescent (sex and age), their grandparents (sex, lineage, and health), and the relationship between them (frequency of contact, frequency of shared activities, ease of communication, and trusting relationship) are relevant for explaining the adolescent's perception of the level of affection received from their grandparents; (b) to determine if the level of grandparent affection explains adolescent emotional well-being, controlling the possible influence of the level of mother/father's affection; and (c) to analyze if this explicative model of adolescent emotional well-being could vary according to family type (traditional two-parent families, joint custody, or families with only on biological parent, differentiating between mother or father).

Method

Participants and Procedure

The participants are from a representative sample of school-aged Spanish adolescents selected as part of the 2014 *Health Behaviour in School-aged Children* (HBSC) study in Spain. The HBSC[1] is an international study with over 40 participating countries, backed by the World Health Organization. Data collection complied with the HBSC international protocol requirements: adolescents must respond individually, the questionnaires must be administered at school and under the supervision of a trained professional, and lastly that the responses remain anonymous. The study was approved by the University of Seville Experimental Ethics Committee.

For this present research, the total sample is comprised of 3,432 adolescents between 11 years and 16 years old who reported that they currently spend time with at least one of their grandparents, who represent 88.8% of the total sample of Spanish adolescents. More details about the HBSC methodology can by consulted in Moreno et al. (2016).

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Instruments

The variables were evaluated using the Spanish HBSC questionnaire, which is a standardized instrument comprised of questions and scales that measure various aspects of adolescent health and well-being (Roberts et al., 2009).

Variables directly related to the adolescents were as follows:

- Demographic variables: sex (48.4% *boys* and 51.6% *girls*) and age (32.8% *11–12 years old*, 35% *13–14 years old*, and 32.2% *15–16 years old*).
- Perceived affection from family members was measured using the four-item subscale from the *Parental Bonding Inventory-Brief Current form* (PBI-BC; Klimidis et al., 1992). This dimension includes the following aspects that were asked separately for father, mother, and the grandparent with whom they currently spend more time: "They help me as much as I need," "They are loving," "They understand my problems and preoccupations," and "They make me feel better when I am sad". Responses were scored on a Likert scale from 1 (*never*) to 3 (*almost always*). The sample for father's affection was 2,798 with mean 2.64 (standard deviation, SD: 0.46) and Cronbach alpha .826; the sample for mother's affection was 3,114, with mean 2.76 (SD: 0.34) and Cronbach alpha .736; and for grandparent affection the sample was 3,284, with mean 2.7 (SD: 0.42) and Cronbach alpha .809.
- Emotional well-being was measured using *Kidscreen-10*, a scale with 10 items covering physical, psychological, and social aspects (Ravens-Sieberer et al., 2001). Responses were reported on a five-point Likert scale. The sample for this item was 2,854, with mean 3.89 (SD: 0.58), minimum 1.4, maximum 5, and Cronbach alpha .812.

Regarding the characteristics of the grandparent with whom the adolescent currently spends more time, we evaluated sex (24.4% *male* and 75.6% *female*), lineage (33.4% *paternal* and 66.6% *maternal grandparents*), and the grandparent's health as perceived by the grandchildren (in a sample of 3,390 the values were 3.1% *poor*, 17.6% *passable* and 79.3% *good or excellent*).

Furthermore, the adolescents informed about the following aspects regarding their relationship with the grandparent with whom they currently spend more time:

- Frequency of contact with this grandparent, evaluated with the item "How often do you currently see to this grandparent?" The sample of 3,395 adolescents was distributed as follows: 34.1% *daily*, 45.2% *weekly*, and 20.6% *occasional*.

- Frequency of sharing an activity with this grandparent, such as taking walks, playing, cooking, going to cultural or sporting events, reading, etc. The sample of 3,378 adolescent was distributed as follows: 20.2% *never*, 33.5% *sporadically*, and 46.3% *weekly or more*.
- Ease of communication with this grandparent, evaluated with the item "How easy is it to talk with this grandparent?" The sample of 3,369 adolescents was distributed as follows: 10.5% *difficult* or *very difficult*, 40.1% *easy*, and 49.4% *very easy*.
- Trusting relationship with this grandparent, evaluated with the item "If you had to make an important decision or if you felt depressed or unhappy, how likely are you to talk about it with this grandparent?" The response options on a Likert scale varied from 1 (*I definitely would not*) to 5 (*I definitely would*). In a sample of 3,379 the mean was 3.61 (SD: 1.28).

Lastly, attending to our last objective regarding family types, the sample was divided into four groups: (a) 2,696 adolescents living in traditional households in which their two biological parents are together; (b) 182 adolescents from families with joint custody; (c) 59 adolescents from mixed or reconstituted, homoparental, and monoparental families in which the biological father is the reference figure (henceforth "father-only"); and; (d) 363 adolescents from mixed or reconstituted, homoparental, and monoparental families in which the biological mother is the reference figure (henceforth "mother-only").

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics 26.0. Different effect-size tests were conducted (whose levels can be consulted in Cohen, 1988) in order to avoid type I and II errors that statistical significance could generate. Student-*t* was used for means comparison, ANOVA as a significance text, and Cohen's *d* for effect size, with the following levels: *low* (0.20 to 0.49), *medium* (0.50 to 0.79), and *high* (above 0.80). Pearson's correlation was used to determine the relationship between quantitative variables, and eta was employed to test effect size, with the following levels: *low* (.100 to .299), *medium* (.300 to .499), and *high* (above .500). Fisher's *Z* was used to compare correlations, and Cohen's *q* to test effect size, with the following values: *low* (from .100 to .299), *medium* (from .300 to .499), and *high* (above .500).Likewise, various multi-stage general lineal models (GLM) were conducted. We first carried out several stepwise models analyzing the main effects, and afterwards we replicated the last model adding all possible

interaction effects. The predictive capacity of each model was indicated using the coefficient of determination (R^2), as well as the standardized beta and significance statistic for each of the variables included in the models. In addition, partial eta squared (η_p^2) was used to test effect size, with the following levels: *low* (.010 to .059), *medium* (.060 to .139), and *high* (above .140).

Results

Mean Differences of Perceived Affection from Father, Mother, and Grandparent According to Adolescent, Grandparent, and Relationship Characteristics

Regarding the adolescent's characteristics (Table 1), older age is related to lower levels of affection from the father, mother, and grandparent. With respect to the grandparent's characteristics, their worse state of health is related to lower levels of affection from the father, mother, and grandparent.

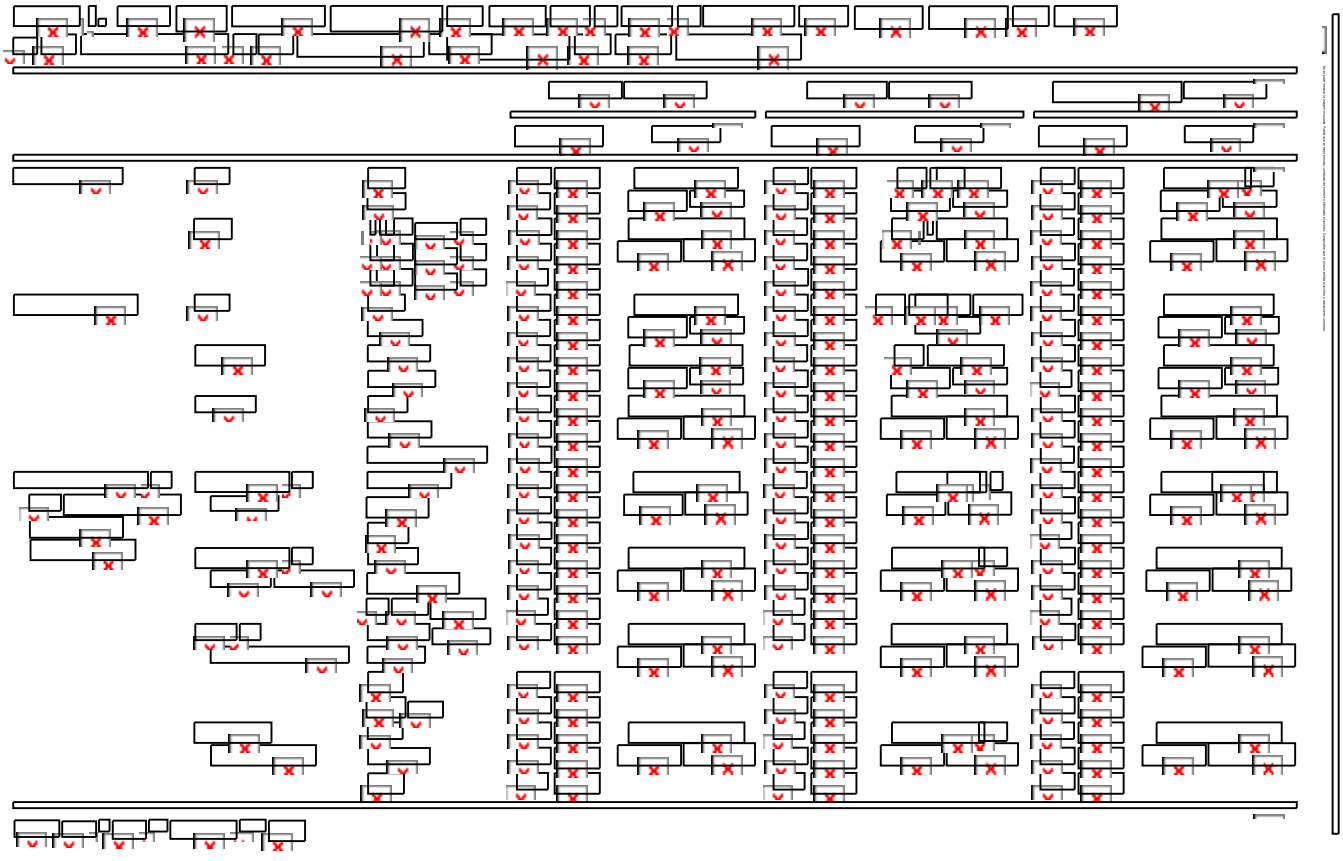
With regard to the characteristics of the grandparent-adolescent relationship, the lower frequency of contact is related to lower levels of affection from the grandparent, although it is not related to affection from the father or mother. By contrast, the lower frequency of sharing activities, less ease of communication, and a less trusting relationship with the grandparent is related with lower levels of affection from the father, mother, and grandparent.

Explanatory model of perceived affection from grandparents according to the characteristics of the adolescent, grandparent, and their relationship. Table 2 displays the results of the GLM introducing new variables (with respect to the prior model) in order to explain the variance in perceived affection from the grandparents.

Model 1 includes only the main effects of the adolescent's sex and age, explaining 0.9% of the variability in grandparent affection. In this case, we find that older adolescents perceive less affection from their grandparents than younger adolescents, with the adolescent's sex being irrelevant (not reaching a considerable effect size).

Model 2 adds the main effects of the specific grandparent variables (sex, age, and health), increasing the explained variance to 4.8%. However, although the new variables are statistically significant in their relationship with affection, only grandparent's health shows a considerable effect size: the grandparent's worse state of health is related to a lower level of affection.

Model 3 adds the main effects of relationship variables, increasing the explained variance of affection to 36%. In this case, barring the frequency of contact all other variables (shared activities, ease of communication, and



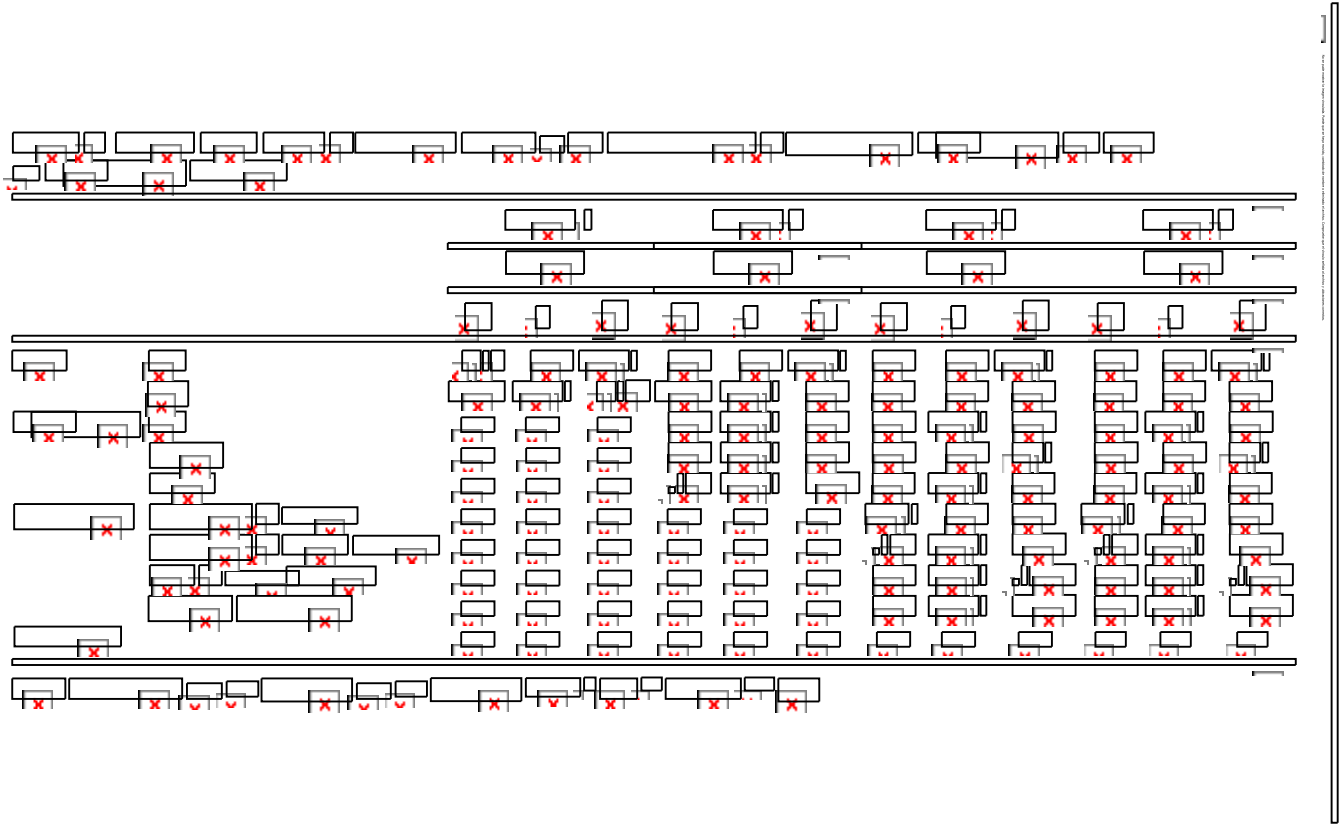


Table 3. Bivariate Correlations, Statistical Significance and Sample Size in the Relationships amongst Adolescent Emotional Well-being, and Father, Mother, and Grandparent's Affection.

		Emotional Well-being	Father's Affection	Mother's Affection
Father's affection	Correlation	.401**		
	Sig.	$p<.001$		
	N	2331		
Mother's affection	Correlation	.436**	.500***	
	Sig.	$p<.001$	$p<.001$	
	N	2601	2707	
Grandparent's affection	Correlation	.225*	.261*	.275*
	Sig.	$p<.001$	$p<.001$	$p<.001$
	N	2757	2689	2996

Sig., statistical significance; effect size: * low, ** medium, *** high.

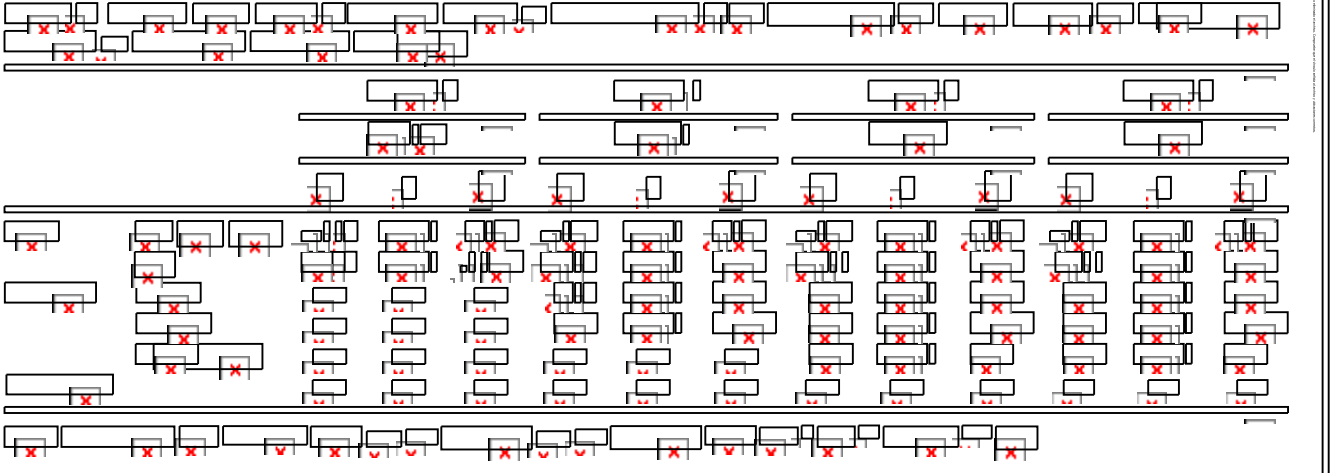
trusting relationship) show a statistically significant relationship and a considerable effect size with grandparent affection. Specifically, affection is higher for those adolescents who perceive easier communication, a higher level of trust, and share more activities with their grandparents. However, the variable health—added in Model 2—no longer shows a considerable effect size when the relationship variables are included.

Model 4 explored the possible interaction effects between the explanatory variables; however none of them show a considerable effect size.

Explanatory Model of Adolescent Emotional Well-being based on Perceived Affection from Grandparent, Controlling Perceived Affection from Father and Mother

Table 3 displays the relationships between variables that will later be included in the GLM. Specifically, we find that adolescent emotional well-being positively correlates with the level of affection from the father, mother, and grandparent. Father and mother's affection are correlated with a large effect size, and grandparent affection correlates with both father and mother's affection.

Having shown the correlations between emotional well-being and the three sources of affection, Table 4 displays the results from the GLM conducted to predict emotional well-being. Model 0 includes only the control variables (adolescent's sex and age), Model 1 adds the level of father and mother's affection, and Model 2 adds the level of grandparent affection. Lastly, Model 3 analyzes the possible interaction effects.



According to Model 0, the two demographic variables explain 12.4% of emotional well-being: sex (higher emotional well-being in boys) and age (lower emotional well-being in older adolescents). This percentage increases to 28.1% after adding father and mother's affection. However, when grandparent affection is added, the explained variance hardly shows any differences, only increasing to 28.5%. In fact, this variable does not show a relevant statistical weight in explaining emotional well-being (β_Z=.067, p^2 =.006) when the other variables are included (sex, age, father, and mother's affection). In other words, the influence of grandparent affection disappears when father and mother's affection is controlled. Lastly, we explored the possible existence of interaction effects between the explanatory variables (Model 3;, however none of them present considerable effect size.

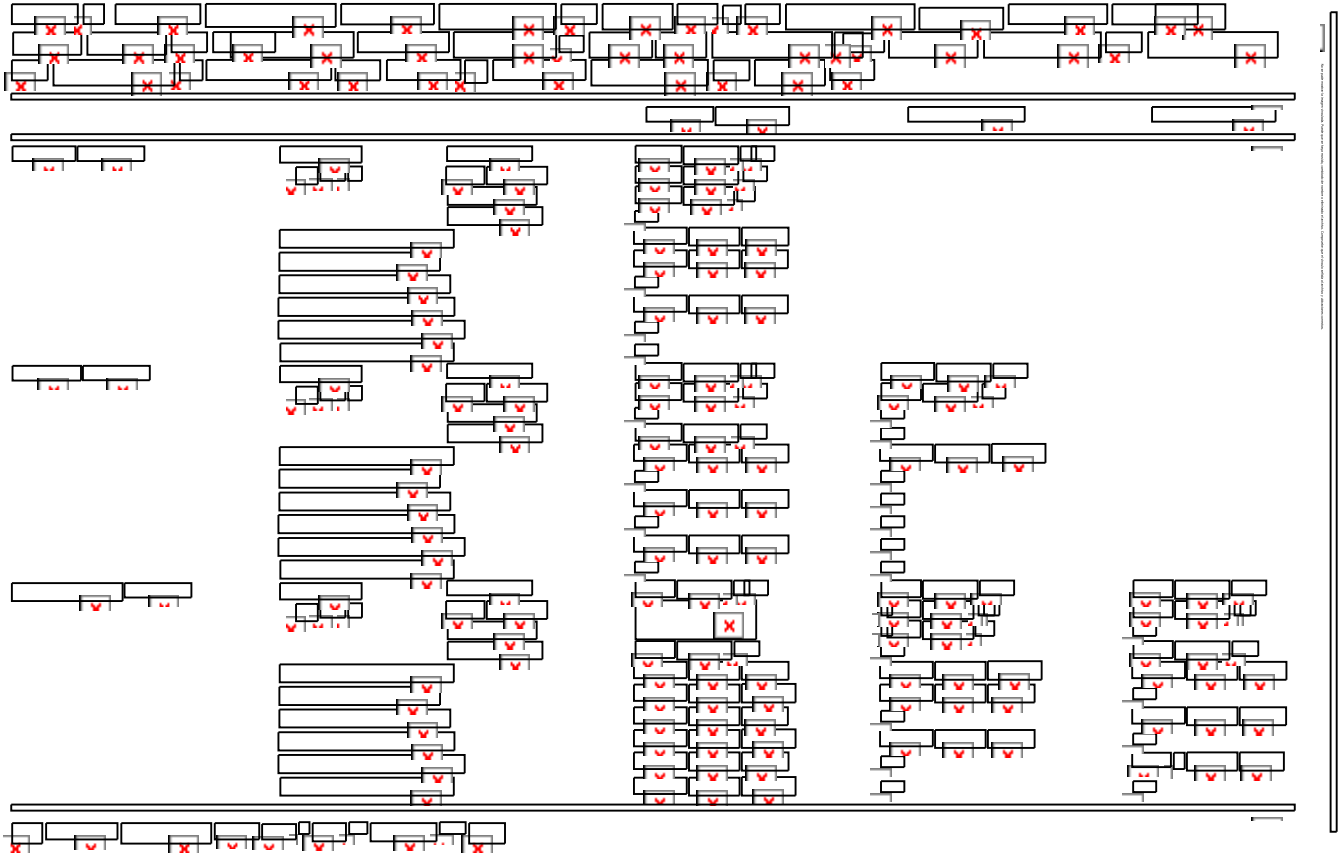
Explanatory Model of Adolescent Emotional Well-being based on Perceived Grandparent Affection, according to Family Type

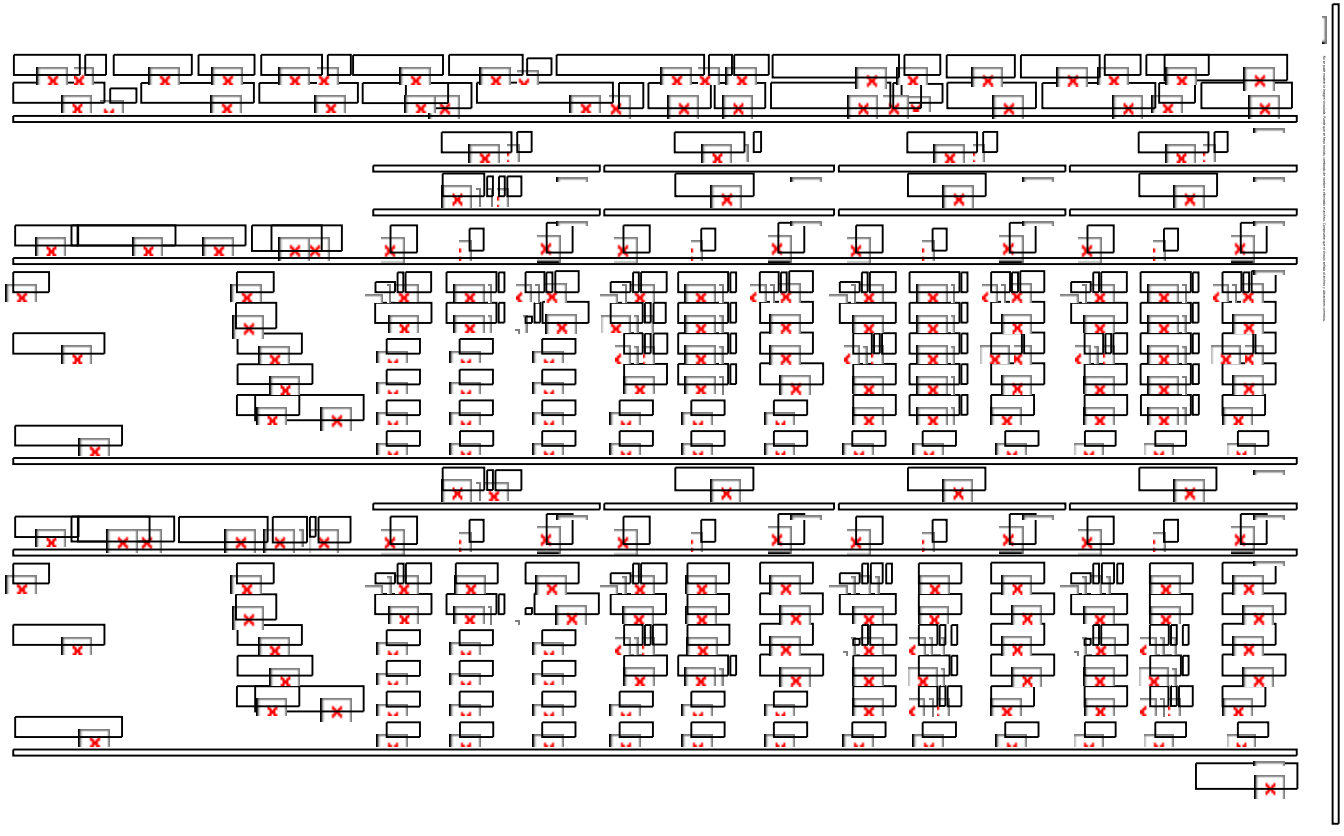
Table 5—like Table 3—shows the relationship between variables that will later be included in the GLM. However, in Table 5, these relationships are displayed according family-type and the correlations are compared amongst each other, based on Fisher's *Z* and Cohen's *q*.

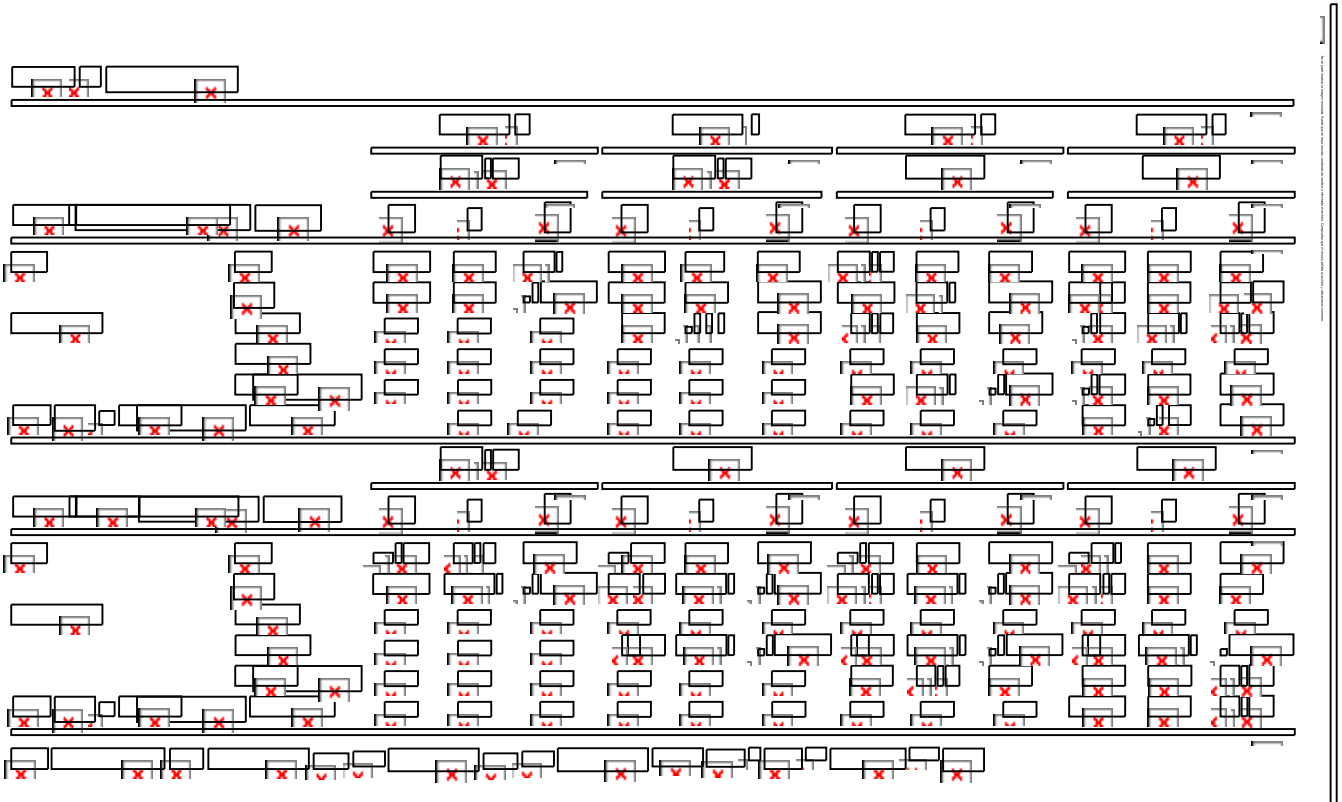
Just like in the global sample (see Table 3), all variables correlate in all four family-types. When these correlations are compared amongst each other according to family-type, differences are observed in the correlation between grandparent affection and emotional well-being: this correlation is higher in father-only families (r=.394), compared to traditional two-parent families (r=.214), joint custody (r=.191), and mother-only families (r=.244). Likewise, the correlation between grandparent and father's affection is higher in traditional families (r=.271) than in joint custody (r=.157). Lastly there is higher correlation between father and mother's affection in traditional families (r=.518) that in joint custody (r=.267).

Table 6 shows the results of the various GLM—conducted separately—to predict adolescent emotional well-being in each of the four family-types. Just like the prior GLM (Table 4), Model 0 only includes the control variables (adolescent sex and age), Model 1 adds father and mother's affection, Model 2 adds grandparent affection, and lastly Model 3 shows any existing interaction effects.

There are certain differences with respect to the previous GLM of the global sample (see Table 4) that can be observed (see Table 6). Regarding the adolescents'demographic variables, sex is no longer important for explaining emotional well-being in father-only families, and the weight of age is more







important (high effect size) for explaining emotional well-being in the three non-traditional family types, compared to traditional two-parent families (medium effect size).

There are also important differences between Models 0 and 1 in the change in explained variance, that is, using only sex and age to explain emotional well-being compared to including mother's affection along with demographic variables. Whereas for adolescents from father-only families, this change implies only a 7% increase in explained variance (from an R^2 of .126 in Model 0, to an R^2 of .196 in Model 1), for those from traditional families, there is a 16.3% change, 13.2% for joint custody, and 14.8% for mother-only families. Accordingly, when comparing the statistical weight of parental affection in the four family-types, the weight of father's affection in father-only families is lower (β_Z=.276) than the weight of mother's affection in mother-only families (β_Z=.394). In the other two family-types (traditional and joint custody), the weight of mother's affection (.264 and .294, respectively) is also higher than that of the father (.217 and .212, respectively).

Regarding the change in explained variance between Models 1 and 2—adding grandparent affection—the change is barely noticeable in the three family-types with a maternal figure (traditional, joint custody, and mother-only). However, for father-only families, there is a significant increase in explained variance between Models 1 and 2, from an R^2 of .196 to an R^2 of .256. In fact, the statistical weight of grandparent affection is much higher for adolescents from father-only families (β_Z=.286) than for those from traditional (β_Z=.072), joint custody (β_Z=.008), and mother-only families ($_Z$=.063).

Lastly, Model 3 shows the existence of interaction effects in explaining emotional well-being variance in adolescents from both father-only and mother-only families. Specifically, in both cases, the relationship of grandparent affection to emotional well-being is moderated by the adolescent's age. However, the statistical weight of both interactions indicates that this moderation is different according to family type. Specifically, in father-only families, the correlation between grandparent affection and emotional well-being increases from .104 at 11–12 years old to .783 at 15–16 years old, whereas by contrast, in mother-only families this correlation decreases from .365 at 11–12 years old to .135 at 15–16 years old. In addition, these interaction effects have a clearly higher influence in adolescents from father-only (β_Z=.260) compared to mother-only families (β_Z=-.086). In fact, whereas the change in explained variance between Models 2 and 3 is 2.7% for father-only families, in the case of mother-only, the change is 0.4%.

Discussion

Our data indicates that Spanish adolescents perceive a high level of affection from their grandparents, very similar to what they receive from their father or mother. However, perceived parental affection shows a higher effect on adolescent emotional well-being than grandparent affection. Nonetheless, this study demonstrates how this affirmation can change in the case of families with only one biological parent, as well as the influence of certain characteristics of the adolescent, the grandparent, and their relationship in these situations.

Accordingly, the results seem to indicate that grandparent affection has a higher impact on adolescent emotional well-being when they live in father-only families, however not when they live in either mother-only or two-parent families. Data from the National Statistics Institute (2020) of Spain show similar proportions of households with "only father" to those of the present study, placing it at around 2%. This low proportion in the social reality of father-only families—which has increased by 21% since 2013 according to data from the same INE survey—continues to be a sample of adolescents with difficult access that limits their statistic power in comparison with other more numerous family types. However, these results point towards an interesting line of research and—oinciding with the aforementioned *latent function hypothesis* (Cherlin & Furstenberg, 1986) and with two prior studies (Coall & Hertwig, 2010; Ruiz-Silverstein, 2007)—could have interesting implications for intervention, bringing to light the importance of involving grandparents in a separation or divorce process, even in the administrative or legal aspects. This is all the more relevant when considering that the new generation of grandparents is more familiarized with socially diverse situations—such as new family structures—due to their own sociocultural characteristics (Ramos, 2019). In fact, national Spanish organization such as the association *Abuelos Separados de sus Nietos* (Grandparents Separated from their Grandchildren) advocate for this active role, and in certain cases, courts have already ruled in favor of grandparent visitation rights.

In addition, our research highlights the need to be particularly sensitive to promoting the grandparents' presence in father-only families, especially considering the existing lineage-based differences between the grandparents who spend more time with the adolescents (33.4% paternal compared to 66.6% maternal lineage), although it is not a relevant variable in explaining the level of perceived affection. Furthermore, the matrolineal inclination—which some theories relate with the points of uncertainty in the genetic relationship of these intergenerational relationships (Bishop et al., 2009)—make it especially important to focus efforts on promoting positive grandparenting in the case of paternal grandparents, especially in father-only families.

The adolescent's sex and age were included as control variables for their relevance in emotional well-being, as Palacio-Vieira et al. (2008) also point out with Spanish data. In this regard, our findings showed age to have a moderator role in explaining well-being based on grandparent affection, which differs according to family type. Thus, whereas the correlation between grandparent affection and emotional well-being increases with the age of the adolescent from father-only families, this correlation decreases with age for adolescents living in mother-only families. In addition to the fact that grandparents are more involved when they see their grandchildren's life as less prototypical—as mentioned in the introduction—these results could also align with research pointing out that adolescents from less-conventional families may show different maturation patterns than their peers (Hay & Nash, 2002). The pending hypothesis for future research is whether the developmental rate of adolescents from father-only families is so different that it causes them to be more aware of and make better use of their grandparents as an emotional resource as they age, that is to say, the opposite trend from their peers in other family situations (Creasey & Koblewsky, 1991; Peterson & Bush, 2013).

Regarding the grandparents' sex, descriptive values show that grandmothers (75.6%) spend more time with their grandchildren compared to grandfathers (24.4%). However, after analyzing the affective relationship between adolescents and the grandparent with whom they currently spend more time, our research shows no noticeable gender differences, consistent with the conceptual framework of *generative grandfathering* (Bates, 2009). Nonetheless, the social challenge still lies in the other part of grandfathers that are more distant from their grandchildren's lives, keeping in mind that this part of grandfathers is still more in number. In addition, to qualify these results, assuming that the grandparent's health is an important factor for explaining the intensity of the relationship and the affection that they give their grandchildren—as other studies have demonstrated (e.g., Hoff, 2007)—one must consider that the statistics show older women to have a worse state of health than their male peers (Pino-Domínguez et al., 2016, also with Spanish sample), and therefore their higher involvement implies an even bigger commitment.

However, is should be recalled that our results also show that grandparent health ceases to be important in explaining the affection perceived by their grandchildren when grandparent-grandchild relationship variables are included in the models. Specifically, it is shown that frequency of contact is not important, but rather the quality of that time they spend together, which can be deduced by the activities they share, the ease of communication, and the presence of a trusting relationship in which the adolescents see their grandparents as a reference when making important decisions or feeling depressed or unhappy. Therefore, these results highlight the importance of

the grandparent-grandchild relationship during adolescence not being mediated by the intermediate generation (the parents), which is traditionally who promotes and facilitates contact between grandchildren and grandparents (Robertson, 1975). Thereby, our results demonstrate that the affective relationship with grandparents is better in households with strong affective relationships with the father and/or mother. In this sense, it is important to not only foster an independent relationship between adolescents and grandparents, motivated by the quality of early affective bonds, but also to stimulate a vision of the grandparents as a valuable resource.

This research has some limitations that must be considered, such as its transversal design, more limited than longitudinal designs for detecting causality or the direction of the relationships between variables. In addition, it should be mentioned that all the information is self-reported by the adolescents and refers to their perception, and therefore future research could add to these results by using the grandparents as self-informants. Likewise, although the HBSC sample is large and representative of the Spanish adolescent population, the sample size clearly decreases when studying adolescents living in non-traditional family structures (joint custody, mixed or reconstituted, homoparental, and monoparental), thus limiting the complexity of data analyses and not allowing certain more specific family aspects, in which non-biological parents are included, to be analyzed.

However, despite these limitations, the strength of this study lies in examining an important and infrequently researched subject: the role of grandparents in their adolescent grandchildren's development. Furthermore, we examine this subject in relation to non-traditional family situations that are ever more present in our society, such as families with joint custody or those with only one biological parent (father or mother) as a reference figure. In addition, this subject is analyzed from the adolescent's perspective and in a sufficiently representative study that permits the results to be generalized on a national level.

What this research clearly brings to light is that grandparents can be an important source of social support during their grandchildren's adolescence and thus have a very positive influence on their emotional well-being. Therefore, this study advocates for reinforcing the role of the grandparents during adolescence, becoming especially relevant for boys and girls living in father-only families.

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Note

1. See http://www.hbsc.org/

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