

The relationship between adolescent psychological resilience and parenting styles

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Abstract: Objective: To understand the characteristics of adolescent psychological resilience and explore its relationship with parenting styles. Methods: A group of 400 middle school students were assessed using the Egna Minnen av Barndoms Uppfostran (EMBU) questionnaire and the Adolescent Psychological Resilience Scale. Results: Difference tests indicated significant differences in the total psychological resilience scores by grade ($t=3.804$, $P<0.01$) and only-child status ($t=2.023$, $P<0.05$). Correlation analysis showed that the total psychological resilience score was positively correlated with both paternal and maternal emotional warmth and understanding parenting styles ($r=0.356-0.408$, $P<0.01$), and negatively correlated with paternal and maternal rejection-denial and punitive parenting styles ($r=-0.223$ to -0.273 , $P<0.01$). Regression analysis revealed that the emotional warmth and understanding factors in parenting styles positively predicted resilience, while paternal rejection-denial and maternal punitive harshness negatively predicted resilience. Conclusion: Parenting styles of both fathers and mothers can influence adolescent psychological resilience. Parenting styles characterized by emotional warmth and understanding are conducive to fostering psychological resilience in adolescents.

Keywords: adolescents, psychological resilience, parenting styles, Adolescent Psychological Resilience Scale, Egna Minnen av Barndoms Uppfostran (EMBU) questionnaire

1. Introduction

In contemporary society, adolescents are facing an increasingly complex social environment, with growing contradictions in their physical and mental development and more acute psychological issues. News reports of "adolescents ending their own lives due to excessive psychological pressure" are not uncommon.

In the 1970s and 1980s, some Western scholars observed that when confronted with similar adverse conditions, some adolescents or children could maintain a good state of well-being and demonstrate strong adaptability, while others suffered significant setbacks in such environments and struggled to adapt effectively [1]. In response to this phenomenon of differential outcomes in adversity, scholars proposed the concept of "psychological resilience" (also referred to as mental elasticity, resilience, or adversity quotient), which refers to an individual's effective coping and positive adaptation in the face of adversity, difficulties, trauma, threats, or other significant life stressors [2]. Since then, most research on psychological resilience has focused on the "problem-focused" model, which examines individuals' psychological resilience under adverse conditions. However, with the rise of positive psychology, studies have suggested that even in the absence of setbacks or adverse situations, psychological resilience can play a positive role in maintaining good mental well-being and enhancing happiness [3]. Therefore, this study adopts this perspective, focusing on ordinary adolescents under general life conditions or normal stress levels, collecting data on their psychological resilience for further investigation.

In recent years, researchers have extensively studied psychological resilience. Studies have shown that psychological resilience can effectively predict individual well-being [4-5] and is also closely related to school adaptation, psychological symptoms, and loneliness [6-8]. Additionally, research indicates that psychological resilience is influenced by various factors [9-10]. However, most of these studies have focused on college students as participants [11-13]. While some studies have identified parenting styles as a factor influencing psychological resilience, none have objectively quantified the relationship between the

two using data. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the relationship between adolescent psychological resilience and parenting styles through questionnaire surveys, providing a basis for improving adolescent psychological resilience by modifying family environments.

2. Objects and methods

2.1. Participants

A total of 200 students were randomly selected from the first grade of a high school and the first grade of a middle school in Shandong Province for group testing. A total of 400 questionnaires were distributed, and 335 were valid (83%). The age range of the participants was 12 to 17 years, including 174 males (51.9%) and 161 females (48.1%); 114 were only children (34%), and 221 were non-only children (66%); 178 were in the first grade of high school (53.1%), and 157 were in the first grade of middle school (46.9%).

2.2. Methods

2.2.1. Adolescent psychological resilience scale [14]

Developed by Hu Yueqin and Gan Yiqun, this scale consists of 27 items covering five dimensions: goal focus, emotional control, positive cognition, family support, and interpersonal assistance. The scale uses a 5-point rating system, with 1 indicating "completely disagree" and 5 indicating "completely agree." Higher scores indicate greater psychological resilience. The Cronbach's α coefficient for the scale is greater than 0.7, with an overall internal consistency coefficient of 0.85. The item discrimination indices are all above 0.30, indicating good discriminative validity.

2.2.2. Egnä minnen av barndoms uppfostran (EMBU) questionnaire [15]

This scale was developed in 1980 by C. Perris and others from the Department of Psychiatry at Umea University in Sweden to evaluate parenting attitudes and behaviors. It was later introduced and revised in China by Yue Dongmei and others in the late 1980s. The revised EMBU consists of 66 items, rated on a 4-point scale, with 1 indicating "never" and 4 indicating "always." The questionnaire includes two subscales for father and mother parenting styles, with the father's parenting style comprising 6 factors and the mother's parenting style comprising 5 factors. The reliability coefficients for the factors range from 0.553 to 0.911, and the overall internal α coefficient for the full scale is 0.950.

2.3. Statistical analysis

SPSS 17.0 software was used for general descriptive analysis, independent samples t-tests, correlation analysis, and regression analysis.

3. Results

3.1. Demographic differences in total psychological resilience scores

Significant differences in total psychological resilience scores were found for only-child status and grade level: high school students exhibited significantly higher psychological resilience than middle school students, and only children exhibited significantly higher psychological resilience than non-only children. No significant differences were found for gender, as shown in Table 1.

3.2. Correlation between total psychological resilience scores and parenting styles

As shown in Table 2, the total psychological resilience score was significantly positively correlated with paternal emotional warmth and understanding, and significantly negatively correlated with paternal punishment, harshness, and rejection-denial.

Table 1 Demographic Differences in Total Psychological Resilience Scores

Item		Total Resilience Score	t
Gender	Male (n=174)	92.60±13.83	-1.50

	Female (n=161)	94.78±12.75	
Only Child	Yes (n=114)	95.69±13.78	2.023*
	No (n=221)	92.59±13.03	
Grade	Senior 1	96.20±13.61	3.804*
	Junior 1	90.75±12.47	

Table 2 Correlation (r) Between Total Psychological Resilience Scores and Paternal Parenting Styles

Item	Emotional Warmth, Understanding	Punishment, Harshness	Over-Interference	Favoritism Towards Subject	Rejection-Denial	Overprotection	Resilience Total Score
Emotional Warmth, Understanding	1						
Punishment, Harshness	-0.213**	1					
Over-Interference	0.204**	0.551**	1				
Favoritism Towards Subject	0.172**	0.222**	0.175**	1			
Rejection-Denial	-0.117**	0.687**	0.568**	0.120*	1		
Overprotection	0.262**	0.359**	0.518**	0.206**	0.416**	1	
Resilience Total Score	0.356**	-0.251**	-0.063	-0.022	-0.223**	-0.013	1

Table 3 Correlation (r) Between Total Psychological Resilience Scores and Maternal Parenting Styles

Item	Emotional Warmth, Understanding	Over-Interference and Overprotection	Rejection-Denial	Punishment Harshness	Favoritism Towards Subject	Resilience Total Score
Emotional Warmth, Understanding	1					
Over-interference and overprotection	0.140*	1				
Rejection-Denial	-0.359**	-0.529**	1			
Punishment Harshness	-0.420**	0.369**	0.758**	1		
Favoritism Towards Subject	0.089	0.142**	0.146**	0.187**	1	
Resilience Total Score	0.408**	-0.037	-0.229**	-0.273**	-0.045	1

As shown in Table 3, the total score of psychological resilience is significantly positively correlated with emotional warmth and understanding in maternal parenting styles, and significantly negatively correlated with rejection, denial, and punitive harshness.

Table 4 Regression Analysis of Total Psychological Resilience Scores and Paternal Parenting Styles

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient	t	P
	B	Standard Error			

Constant	79.723	4.087		19.506	0.000
Emotional Warmth and Understanding	0.415	0.063	0.334	6.597	0.000
Rejection and Denial	-0.786	0.216	-0.184	-3.637	0.000
R=0.400,R ² =0.155					

3.3. Regression analysis

3.3.1. Regression analysis of resilience scores and paternal parenting styles

Using the total psychological resilience score as the dependent variable and the six factors of paternal parenting style (including emotional warmth and understanding; punishment and harshness; over-interference; favoritism toward the subject; rejection and denial; and overprotection) as independent variables, a multiple linear regression equation was established. Stepwise regression was employed to examine the influencing factors of psychological resilience, as shown in Table 4.

The results indicated that the factors of emotional warmth and understanding, as well as rejection and denial, entered the regression equation: emotional warmth and understanding positively predicted resilience, while rejection and denial negatively predicted it. The two factors collectively explained 15.5% of the total variance.

3.3.2. Regression analysis of resilience scores and maternal parenting styles

Using the total psychological resilience score as the dependent variable and the five factors of maternal parenting style (including emotional warmth and understanding; over-interference and overprotection; rejection and denial; punishment and harshness; and favoritism toward the subject) as independent variables, a multiple linear regression equation was established. Stepwise regression was employed to examine the influencing factors of psychological resilience, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5 Regression Analysis of Total Psychological Resilience Scores and Maternal Parenting Styles

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient	t	p
	B	Standard Error			
Constant	72.726	5.017		14.496	0
Emotional Warmth and Understanding	0.454	0.069	0.360	6.544	0
Punishment and Strictness	-0.313	0.146	-0.118	-2.150	0.032
	r=0.423, R ² =0.174				

The results show that the two factors of emotional warmth and understanding, and punishment and harshness entered the regression equation: emotional warmth and understanding positively predicted resilience, while punishment and harshness negatively predicted it. The two factors collectively explained 17.4% of the total variance.

4. Discussion

In the results of this study, psychological resilience showed no significant difference between genders, which is consistent with the findings of Wang Qinqin’s study on psychological resilience among college students [6]. This result indicates that, whether for college students or adolescents, there is no significant gender difference in psychological resilience.

In terms of grade level, the psychological resilience of 10th-grade students was significantly higher than that of 7th-grade students. It is speculated that 7th-grade students, having just entered adolescence, are in a semi-mature stage psychologically, with more extreme thinking and less comprehensive problem-solving approaches, resulting in weaker psychological resilience. In contrast, 10th-grade students, having gone

through adolescence, tend to think more comprehensively, with less extreme views, and are less likely to be overwhelmed by significant life events. Regarding only-child status, the psychological resilience of only children was significantly higher than that of non-only children. This result differs from Chao Fenfen's findings on college students [11] and also slightly contradicts common perceptions. Often, it is generally believed that non-only children have stronger resilience to major events because only children, being highly cherished by their parents, are provided with the best possible living environment and material conditions, potentially leading to a lack of experience in handling adversity. As a result, only children might be more vulnerable to significant life events. The results observed in this study may be attributed to differences in the participant groups. It is also possibly related to the level of attention and time devoted to education by parents. Only children tend to receive more family support, which may enhance their confidence in coping with life stressors.

Regarding the relationship between psychological resilience and parenting styles, the correlation analysis reveals that the factor of emotional warmth and understanding, whether in paternal or maternal parenting styles, is significantly positively correlated with psychological resilience. In contrast, the two factors of rejection-denial and punishment-harshness in both paternal and maternal parenting styles are significantly negatively correlated with the total psychological resilience score, with similar correlation coefficients for both parents. Further regression analysis indicates that emotional warmth and understanding in parenting styles positively predict psychological resilience, while paternal rejection-denial and maternal punishment-harshness negatively predict psychological resilience. These results suggest that parenting styles characterized by emotional warmth and understanding help enhance adolescents' psychological resilience, whereas parenting styles involving punishment, harshness, rejection, or denial, whether from fathers or mothers, are detrimental to the development of psychological resilience in adolescents. This aligns with the currently advocated "encouragement-based education." However, the notion of strict education remains deeply ingrained in the minds of many parents. Yet, from the perspective of this study, strict parenting methods are not the most effective. In the process of raising children, providing warmth and understanding, and genuinely accepting them from the heart, are more conducive to fostering psychological resilience, enabling them to better cope with significant life events in the future.

5. Conclusion

After a series of analyses of the results of this study, we have gained a deeper understanding of the relationship between adolescents' psychological resilience and parenting styles. Enhancing adolescents' psychological resilience holds significant importance for their future lives. Therefore, parents should strive to improve their children's family environment, avoiding harsh treatment and instead expressing love in daily life. Genuinely understanding and accepting children from the heart, carefully recognizing their strengths, and providing a warm and happy family environment are essential steps.

6. References

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