



A study on Psychological Resilience, Alexithymia, and Parenting Styles among Young Adults

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Abstract: In the current period, young adults face a growing number of emotional and social challenges that test their ability to cope and preserve psychological well-being. In order to understand these challenges, it's essential to comprehend the influence of family environment, parenting styles, and coping strategies on psychological well-being. The present study aimed to investigate the relationship among psychological resilience, alexithymia, and parenting styles in young adults aged 18-25 years (N=107). Standardized scales were administered. The findings demonstrated that authoritative parenting had a positive correlation with the self-efficacy component of resilience, while perceived parenting styles, in particular, authoritarian and permissive parenting, were significantly and positively associated with alexithymia. However, no significant relationship was found between psychological resilience and alexithymia. The findings suggested the value of promoting emotionally supportive parenting practices that facilitate self-efficacy, emotional awareness, and overall psychological well-being.

Keywords: *Psychological Resilience, Alexithymia, Parenting Styles, Young Adults.*

1. Introduction

"Children learn best when they feel loved and safe. Feelings are mentionable and manageable."

Fred Rogers

In recent times, young adults often face many challenges, such as academic pressures and social challenges that can negatively impact their psychological well-being during their transition to adulthood. To better understand the factors that affect how young adults deal with

stress and manage emotions, particularly psychological resilience, alexithymia, and parenting styles, various studies are being conducted.

Psychological resilience refers to the ability to bounce back from challenges in an efficient and effective way. Alexithymia is defined as the inability to describe, comprehend, identify, and express emotions and feelings. For an individual with alexithymia, it is difficult to differentiate between different emotions. Parenting styles refer to the approach parents use to raise their children, including their expectations, attitudes, and behaviours towards them.

A GM5 survey in Telangana and Karnataka reported that “24% of students displayed signs of psychological distress, with 6%–10% requiring immediate intervention” (Times of India, 2025). Moreover, in recent times, young adults may struggle with managing stress, understanding their own emotions, and navigating family influences, which can compromise their resilience and mental well-being. Previous research has shown that resilience supports coping, whereas alexithymia and certain restrictive parenting practices may hinder emotional development (Craparo et al., 2018).

Despite these results, limited research has been done to examine the combined effects of parenting styles, alexithymia, and psychological resilience. There is a knowledge gap regarding how these factors interact and collectively affect an individual's emotional and psychological functioning because the majority of research has examined them separately. While supportive parenting may improve coping mechanisms and lessen the negative effects of alexithymia, excessively restrictive or unsupportive parenting may hinder the development of resilience and emotional capacity, making children more susceptible to stress. It is possible to comprehend not only the effects of each variable separately but also how they interact to affect psychological well-being by looking at these connections.

2. Review of Literature

Psychological Resilience

Curtis and Cicchetti (2003) defined the process of resilience as “a dynamic process that is influenced by both neural and psychological self-organisations, as well as the transaction between the ecological context and the developing organism.” Hill et al. (2018) define resilience as “the dynamic process by which a biopsychosocial system returns to a previous level of functioning, following a perturbation caused by a stressor.”

A study aimed to examine the relationships between alexithymia, positive beliefs toward rumination, and psychological resilience in university students. The sample consisted of 144 students. Results revealed a positive relationship between positive beliefs about rumination and

alexithymia, a negative relationship between alexithymia and resilience, and a significant mediating role of alexithymia in the relationship between positive beliefs about rumination and resilience (Çıkrıkçı & Yalçın, 2023).

A study was conducted on 360 English-speaking, multicultural adolescents to examine the relationship between perceived parenting styles and resilience. Standardized measures were used. The results showed that authoritative parenting made the most significant contribution to resilience across both cultural groups and genders. This findings highlight the strong role of authoritative parenting in fostering resilience during adolescence by promoting adaptive coping and a coherent sense of self (Kritzas & Grobler, 2005).

A study aimed to describe stressors and resilience behaviours among college students and examine the relationships among stressors, resilience, and well-being. The sample consisted of 1,010 college students aged 18–26 years from an urban Midwestern university. The results indicated that resilience did not moderate the relationship between stressors and well-being (Hartson et al., 2023).

Alexithymia

According to Taylor, Bagby, and Parker (1997), alexithymia is defined as “alexithymia represents a deficit in the cognitive processing and regulation of affects, which they regard as a potential risk factor for a wide variety of psychiatric and somatic disorders.” Sifneos (1972) defined alexithymia as “It is a construct denoting an incapacity to identify and express emotions and feelings, a limitation in imaginary life and a thought characterized by pragmatic contents with a highly descriptive mode of expression.”

A study was conducted to investigate the relationship between parenting, alexithymia, and adult attachment styles. The sample consisted of 140 students. Participants completed three standardized instruments. The results showed notable gender differences. For male participants, parental control significantly influenced almost all alexithymia subscales, except for externally oriented thinking, which was unaffected by maternal care and paternal control. For female participants, all alexithymia dimensions were influenced by parenting variables, with the exception of paternal control. The study concluded that alexithymia may develop as a response to early caregiver interactions, which in turn can shape both infant and adult attachment patterns (Pellerone et al., 2017).

A study was conducted to examine the relationship between self-compassion, alexithymia, empathy, and mood in a sample of young Australian adults. The participants included 253 university students aged 18–30 years. Standardized, validated measures for all variables were used. The results showed that alexithymia was negatively correlated with both

self-compassion and empathy, while self-compassion and empathy were positively correlated with one another. The study concluded that alexithymia is a critical risk factor for negative emotional outcomes in young adults, while self-compassion may serve as a protective resource (Lyvers et al., 2020).

A study examined the mediating roles of academic anxiety and resilience in the relationship between alexithymia and academic outcomes among university students. The sample consisted of 257 students who completed self-report questionnaires. The result indicated that anxiety mediated the effects of alexithymia on both academic burnout and performance, whereas resilience mediated the effect of alexithymia on burnout but not on academic performance. The findings suggest that interventions aimed at reducing anxiety and enhancing resilience may have the negative academic consequences of alexithymia (Romano et al., 2019).

Parenting Styles

Parenting practices can be defined as “directly observable specific behaviours that parents use to socialize their children” (Darling & Steinberg, 1993). According to Darling and Steinberg (1993), parenting style is “a constellation of parents’ attitudes and behaviours toward children. It is an emotional climate in which the parents’ behaviours are expressed.”

Jámboři and Sallay (2003) investigated whether perceived parenting styles, parental aims, and attitudes influenced adolescents’ and young adults’ future-oriented goals and concerns in the domains of education, occupation, and family. The sample consisted of 130 adolescents and 140 young adults. Participants completed standardized measures for all the variables. The findings suggest that parenting styles significantly shape adolescents’ and young adults’ goals, hopes, and fears about the future. Supportive parenting appears to foster positive family-related aspirations in adolescence, while in young adulthood, less supportive climates may incredibly increase hopes for creating one’s own future family.

A recent study done by Mishra and Sethi (2024) aimed to explore the relationship between perceived parenting styles and resilience, with a focus on gender differences among college students. The sample included 160 college students (80 males and 80 females). Standardized scales were administered to assess three dimensions of parenting style, authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive, alongside measures of resilience. The results demonstrated that authoritative parenting was significantly positively correlated with resilience, indicating that warmth, responsiveness, and firm but flexible parental control foster greater adaptability and coping capacity in young adults. Conversely, authoritarian and permissive parenting styles were negatively correlated with resilience, suggesting that rigid

control or lack of structure undermines students' ability to manage stress effectively. Gender differences were also observed, with male students scoring higher on resilience compared to female students.

Researchers investigated the relationship between fear of negative evaluation and perceived parenting styles (authoritarian, authoritative, permissive) among 150 college students (75 males, 75 females). Standardised self-reports and statistical analyses were used. The results showed that authoritarian parenting was positively correlated with FNE, while authoritative parenting was slightly negatively correlated. Authoritative parenting was the most frequently reported style, suggesting supportive upbringings in many participants. No significant gender differences were found. The findings highlight that authoritarian parenting may increase social fears in emerging adults, whereas authoritative parenting appears protective (Valliamannil, 2025).

3. Purpose

The purpose is to study Psychological Resilience, Alexithymia, and Parenting Styles among Young Adults.

4. Hypothesis

H1: There will be a significant relationship between psychological resilience and alexithymia.

H2: There will be a significant relationship between alexithymia and parenting Styles.

H3: There will be a significant relationship between psychological resilience and Parenting Styles.

H4: There will be no difference between psychological resilience, alexithymia and parenting styles among males and females.

5. Methods

5.1 Sample

A total sample of (N=107) of Males and Females in the age range 18-25 was collected from various socio-cultural backgrounds.

5.2 Measure

Resilience Evaluation Scale: The Resilience Evaluation Scale was used to measure Psychological Resilience for the study. The scale was developed by Van Der Meer et al. (2018).

The measure consists of 9 items, each rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *Strongly disagree* to 5 = *Strongly agree*). The sub-dimensions consisted of self-confidence and self-efficacy.

Perth Alexithymia Questionnaire–Short Form (PAQ-S): The PAQ-S (Preece et al., 2023) is a brief self-report instrument designed to assess alexithymia, defined as difficulties in identifying, describing, and regulating emotions. It consists of 6 items. Each PAQ-S item was rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree), modified from the original 7-point format to maintain consistency across study measures. The sub-scales consisted of - difficulty identifying feelings (DIF), difficulty describing feelings (DDF), and externally oriented thinking (EOT).

Parental Authority Questionnaire – Short Version (PAQ-S): Alkharusi et al., (2011) developed a short version of Buri's (1991) 30-item Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ) to assess three parenting styles per Baumrind's model: authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive. It consists of 20 items, each rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 =Strongly disagree to 5=Strongly agree).

5.3 Procedure

The study was conducted by collecting responses from participants using an online questionnaire created via Google Forms. The sample consisted of 107 young adults aged 18 to 25 years. Participants were invited to voluntarily complete the questionnaire, and their informed consent was obtained before participation. Responses were collected anonymously to ensure confidentiality and encourage honest feedback. Standardised psychological tests were administered to the participants.

6. Analysis of data

6.1 Results

Table 1: *N, Mean, and Standard deviation*

	Total Psychological Resilience	Self Confidence	Self-Efficacy	Total Alexithymia	DIF	DDF	EO T	Total Parenting	Authoritarian	Authoritative	Permissive
N	107	107	107	107	107	107	107	107	107	107	107
Mean	23.0	7.92	15.1	18.0	5.82	6.35	5.82	61.2	21.0	23.1	17.0
SD	6.48	2.91	4.31	5.29	2.08	2.04	2.28	7.24	5.99	5.59	4.04

Note: DIF: Difficulty identifying feelings DDF: Difficulty describing feelings, EOT: Externally oriented Thinking

Table 2 : Correlation

	Total	Self Confidence	Self- Efficacy	Total Alexithymia	DIF	DDF	EOT	Total Parenting	Authoritarian	Authoritative	Permissive
Total Psychological Resilience	—										
Self Confidence	0.844***	—									
Self-Efficacy	0.932***	0.593***	—								
Total Alexithymia	0.060	0.006	0.086	—							
Dif	-0.002	0.057	-0.042	0.847***	—						
Ddf	0.121	0.059	0.142	0.845***	0.660***	—					
Eot	0.033	-0.091	0.111	0.790***	0.461***	0.462***	—				
Total Parenting	0.174	0.076	0.210*	0.326***	0.287**	0.284**	0.241*	—			
Authoritarian	0.040	0.026	0.043	0.301**	0.117	0.348***	0.279**	0.308**	—		
Authoritative	0.188	0.121	0.201*	-0.026	0.028	-0.033	-0.056	0.530***	-0.502***	—	
Permissive	-0.008	-0.069	0.035	0.174	0.302**	0.037	0.095	0.603***	-0.237*	0.313**	—

Note. * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001

Note: DIF: Difficulty identifying feelings DDF: Difficulty describing feelings, EOT: Externally oriented Thinking

Table 3: Independent Sample T-test

		Statistic	Df	P
Total Psychological Resilience	Student's t	-1.9197	105	0.058
Self Confidence	Student's t	-0.7829	105	0.435
Self-Efficacy	Student's t	-2.3679	105	0.020
Total Alexithymia	Student's t	-0.2009	105	0.841
DIF	Student's t	-0.0433	105	0.966
DDF	Student's t	-0.5290	105	0.598
EOT	Student's t	0.0469	105	0.963
Total parenting	Student's t	-1.4942	105	0.138
Authoritarian	Student's t	0.9895 ^a	105	0.325
Authoritative	Student's t	-1.9720	105	0.051
Permissive	Student's t	-1.4489 ^a	105	0.150

Note: DIF: Difficulty identifying feelings DDF: Difficulty describing feelings, EOT: Externally oriented Thinking

Table 4: Group Descriptives

	Group	N	Mean	Median	SD	SE
Total Psychological Resilience	Female	65	22.09	23.00	6.33	0.785

	Male	42	24.52	23.50	6.51	1.004
Self Confidence	Female	65	7.74	8.00	2.85	0.353
	Male	42	8.19	8.00	3.02	0.466
Self-Efficacy	Female	65	14.35	15.00	4.04	0.501
	Male	42	16.33	16.00	4.49	0.693
Total Alexithymia	Female	65	17.91	19.00	5.32	0.660
	Male	42	18.12	18.00	5.31	0.819
DIF	Female	65	5.82	6.00	1.98	0.246
	Male	42	5.83	6.00	2.25	0.347
DDF	Female	65	6.26	7.00	2.15	0.267
	Male	42	6.48	6.00	1.88	0.290
EOT	Female	65	5.83	6.00	2.24	0.278
	Male	42	5.81	6.00	2.36	0.364
Total parenting	Female	65	60.37	60.00	8.08	1.002
	Male	42	62.50	61.00	5.57	0.859
Authoritarian	Female	65	21.51	21.00	6.79	0.842
	Male	42	20.33	21.00	4.48	0.691
Authoritative	Female	65	22.28	23.00	5.89	0.730
	Male	42	24.43	24.50	4.86	0.751
Permissive	Female	65	16.58	17.00	4.55	0.565
	Male	42	17.74	18.00	3.00	0.464

Note: DIF: Difficulty identifying feelings DDF: Difficulty describing feelings, EOT: Externally oriented Thinking

7. Discussion of Results

The results showed many significant relationships among the variables. Self-confidence is significantly positively correlated with psychological resilience ($r=0.84$, $p<.001$). Self-efficacy is significantly positively correlated with total psychological Resilience ($r=0.93$, $p<.001$) and self-confidence ($r=0.59$, $p<.001$). DIF is significantly positively correlated with alexithymia ($r=0.84$, $p<.001$). DDF is significantly positively correlated with alexithymia ($r=0.84$, $p<.001$), and DIF ($r=0.66$, $p<.001$). EOT is significantly positively correlated with alexithymia ($r=0.79$, $p<.001$), DIF ($r=0.46$, $p<.001$), and DDF ($r=0.46$, $p<.001$). Total parenting is significantly positively correlated with Alexithymia ($r=0.32$, $p<.001$). Overall parenting styles are significantly and positively correlated with self-efficacy ($r=0.21$, $p<.05$), DIF ($r=0.28$, $p<.01$), DDF ($r=0.28$, $p<.01$), and EOT ($r=0.24$, $p<.05$). Authoritarian parenting is significantly positively correlated with alexithymia ($r=0.30$, $p<.01$), DDF ($r=0.34$, $p<.001$), EOT ($r=0.27$, $p<.01$) and overall parenting ($r=0.30$, $p<.01$).

Authoritative parenting is significantly and positively correlated with self-efficacy ($r=0.20$, $p<.05$), and overall parenting ($r=0.53$, $p<.001$). Meanwhile, Authoritative parenting was significantly negatively correlated with Authoritarian ($r=-0.50$, $p<.001$). Permissive

parenting is significantly and positively correlated with DIF ($r=0.30$, $p < .01$), Total parenting ($r=0.60$, $p<.001$), and Authoritative parenting ($r=0.31$, $p<.01$). Meanwhile, Permissive Parenting is significantly negatively correlated with Authoritarian Parenting ($r=0.23$, $p<.05$). However, there's no significant relationship between Psychological Resilience and Alexithymia.

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship among psychological resilience, alexithymia, and parenting styles. The results indicate that there is a strong positive relationship between total parenting and alexithymia, particularly authoritarian and permissive parenting, suggesting that restrictive or inconsistent parenting may contribute to difficulties in emotional identification and expression. Authoritative parenting, in contrast, was positively related to the self-efficacy component of resilience, indicating its potential role in fostering confidence and adaptive coping among young adults. There is no significant relationship between psychological resilience and alexithymia. However, psychological resilience has no significant relationship with overall parenting styles. However, the independent T-test results revealed that there is no significant difference in the scores of males and females, except in self-efficacy, where males report higher levels of self-efficacy than females.

The findings confirm our hypothesis that there will be a significant relationship between alexithymia and parenting styles. However, the findings fail to confirm our hypothesis that there will be a significant relationship between psychological resilience and alexithymia and a significant relationship between psychological resilience and parenting styles.

The present results are consistent with Gera & Kaur's (2015) work, which deals with examining the relationship between resilience and parenting styles in adolescents. The results revealed an insignificant correlation between parenting styles and resilience.

The study's limitations include its small sample size, reliance on self-report measures, and geographically limited participant pool, which may have affected generalizability.

8. Conclusion

This study aimed to measure Psychological Resilience, Alexithymia, and Parenting Styles among young adults. For this purpose, a sample of 107 young adults in the age range of 18-25 years old was taken from different socio-cultural backgrounds. Standardized measures were administered: the *Resilience Evaluation Scale*, the *Perth Alexithymia Questionnaire–Short Form*, and the *Parental Authority Questionnaire–Short Version*. The results revealed that perceived parenting styles were significantly associated with alexithymia, particularly authoritarian and permissive parenting. Authoritative parenting, in contrast, was positively

related to the self-efficacy component of resilience. There was no significant relationship between psychological resilience and alexithymia, and gender differences were limited to self-efficacy, where males reported higher scores.

Future research should use larger and more diverse samples, incorporate longitudinal or cross-sectional designs, and examine variables such as childhood trauma, peer pressure, attachment styles, and coping mechanisms to deepen understanding. In real world settings, these insights can assist parents, educators, and mental health professionals to encourage supportive and balanced parenting practices that foster resilience, emotional awareness, and psychological well-being among young adults.

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