



The Impact of Perceived Paternal Parenting Style on Anxiety and Resilience Among Firstborn Adults

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Abstract: This study explores the relationship between perceived paternal parenting styles and psychological outcomes, specifically anxiety and resilience, in first-born adults. While traditional parenting literature has often prioritized maternal influences, this research highlights the significant yet under examined role of fathers in shaping long-term mental health. Drawing from Baumrind's parenting typologies; authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive, this study investigates how first-born adults perceive their paternal figures and how these perceptions correlate with psychological functioning. A sample of 126 first-born adults was assessed using standardized self-report instruments: the Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ), the Zung Self-Rating Anxiety Scale (SAS), and the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC 25). Statistical analyses, including one-way and two-way ANOVA, Pearson correlation, and linear regression, revealed that perceived authoritarian paternal parenting was associated with significantly higher anxiety and lower resilience, while authoritative parenting was linked to the most favorable psychological outcomes. Gender was not found to moderate the relationship between perceived paternal parenting and anxiety, but it had a small significant effect on resilience. These findings underscore the importance of paternal involvement and suggest that children's subjective interpretations of fathering behavior play a pivotal role in their emotional well-being and coping capacities. The implications of these findings are relevant for family counseling, clinical interventions, and culturally sensitive parenting education.

Keywords: *perceived paternal parenting, parenting styles, anxiety, resilience, first-born adults, authoritarian parenting, authoritative parenting.*

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Parenting styles significantly influence an individual's psychological development, including emotional well-being, cognition, and social behavior. While maternal roles have been extensively studied, the father's role—especially in the case of first-born children, is gaining recognition for its impact on mental health outcomes like anxiety and resilience. First-borns often face high expectations and close parental scrutiny, making the paternal parenting style particularly influential in their development.

Baumrind (1966) and later Maccoby and Martin (1983) categorized parenting into authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive styles, each differing in levels of control and warmth. While originally focused on mothers, these frameworks are increasingly applied to fathers. The distinction between actual and perceived parenting styles is crucial, as children's perceptions often shape their psychological responses. Thus, exploring perceived paternal styles can provide insights into mental health outcomes in first-born individuals.

1.2 Importance of Studying Perceived Parenting Styles

Perceived parenting styles, how children interpret their parents' behavior, can impact emotional development, self-esteem, and resilience more than actual parenting behaviors. While paternal involvement has historically been understudied, it is now recognized as critical in shaping children's coping strategies, emotional stability, and attachment styles. Particularly for first-borns, who typically encounter stricter and more involved parenting, the way they perceive their father's involvement may significantly influence anxiety levels and their capacity for resilience.

Supportive and emotionally available paternal behavior fosters resilience; while controlling or distant behavior can heighten anxiety. This study seeks to explore the relationship between perceived paternal parenting styles and psychological outcomes like anxiety and resilience in first-borns.

1.3 Relevance of Paternal Influences on First-Born Adults

First-borns are often exposed to more intense parenting due to being the first child, which can result in increased responsibility and pressure. Fathers, when actively involved, shape the child's coping abilities and emotional development. Paternal behaviors—whether supportive or authoritarian, can influence the mental health of first-borns well into adulthood.

Research shows that first-borns tend to be more responsible yet also more prone to anxiety. The type of paternal parenting they perceive, authoritative, authoritarian, or permissive, can either buffer or intensify these psychological traits. This study focuses on how these perceived paternal styles affect anxiety and resilience among first-born adults.

1.4 Research Gap and Rationale for the study

While maternal parenting has been widely studied, the role of paternal parenting, especially in relation to first-born children, remains underexplored. Existing research often focuses on fathers' influence on sons, overlooking daughters and the unique pressures faced by first-borns. Moreover, limited studies have examined how perceived paternal parenting affects anxiety and resilience in first-born adults.

This study aims to address this gap by investigating the impact of perceived paternal parenting styles on the mental health of first-born adults. By doing so, it highlights the importance of fathers' roles and how perceptions of their parenting influence psychological outcomes like anxiety and resilience.

Findings may guide interventions that encourage supportive paternal involvement, helping to promote resilience and reduce anxiety, particularly in individuals who have borne early family expectations as first-borns.

1.5 Research Objectives

The following objectives have been formulated to guide the scope and direction of this research:

1. To investigate the association between perceived paternal parenting styles and psychological outcomes (anxiety and resilience) among first-born adults.
2. To evaluate the moderating role of gender in the relationship between perceived paternal parenting style and psychological outcomes (anxiety and resilience).
3. To analyze the interplay between anxiety and resilience, and how perceived paternal parenting style influences this relationship.

1.6 Hypotheses of the Study

H1: There is a significant association between perceived paternal parenting styles (authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive) and psychological outcomes (anxiety and resilience) among first-born adults.

- **H0₁ (Null Hypothesis):** There is no significant association between perceived paternal parenting styles and anxiety or resilience in first-born adults.
- **H1₁ (Alternate Hypothesis):** Perceived paternal parenting styles are significantly associated with anxiety and resilience in first-born adults.

H2 (Moderation Hypothesis): Gender moderates the relationship between perceived paternal parenting styles and psychological outcomes (anxiety and resilience).

- **H0₂:** Gender does not significantly moderate the relationship between perceived paternal parenting styles and anxiety or resilience.
- **H1₂:** Gender significantly moderates the relationship between perceived paternal parenting styles and anxiety or resilience.

H3 (Interplay Hypothesis): There is a significant inverse relationship between anxiety and resilience, and this relationship is influenced by the perceived paternal parenting style.

- **H0₃:** There is no significant relationship between anxiety and resilience, nor does perceived paternal parenting style influence this relationship.
- **H1₃:** There is a significant inverse relationship between anxiety and resilience, and this relationship varies based on the perceived paternal parenting style.

1.7 Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between perceived paternal parenting styles and psychological outcomes, specifically anxiety and resilience, among first-born adults?
2. Does gender moderate the relationship between perceived paternal parenting style and the psychological outcomes of anxiety and resilience?
3. What is the nature of the relationship between anxiety and resilience in first-born adults, and how is this interplay influenced by perceived paternal parenting style?

2. Review of Literature

2.1 Parenting Styles and Psychological Outcomes

2.1.1 Baumrind's Parenting Style Theory

Baumrind (1967, 1973) introduced a foundational model of parenting, outlining three styles—authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive—based on levels of responsiveness and demandingness. Authoritative parents combine warmth with firm control, promoting autonomy and social competence. Authoritarian parents emphasize strict rules and obedience with low emotional warmth, often linked to anxiety and reduced self-esteem. Permissive parents are warm but lack control or discipline, which can result in poor self-regulation and academic challenges.

2.1.2 Neglectful and Overprotective Parenting Styles

Later models identified two additional styles: neglectful and overprotective. Neglectful parenting involves low warmth and low control, often leading to emotional insecurity and poor

resilience. Overprotective parenting, though rooted in concern, limits a child's autonomy and fosters dependence, potentially increasing anxiety and reducing self-efficacy (Rapee, 2012).

2.1.3 Cross-Cultural Differences in Parenting

Cultural context significantly shapes parenting and its outcomes. In Western cultures, authoritative parenting is linked to positive development, while in collectivist societies, authoritarian styles may be perceived as caring and beneficial. Cultural values influence how parental behaviors are interpreted, highlighting the importance of context in evaluating their impact on children's mental health.

2.2 Paternal Parenting and Its Significance

Fathers play a distinctive and influential role in child development through unique interaction patterns and parenting styles. Unlike mothers, who are typically associated with emotional nurturance, fathers often engage in physical play and risk-oriented activities that foster autonomy and resilience (Lamb, 2010; Paquette, 2004). The quality of father-child interactions—characterized by warmth and responsiveness—is more predictive of positive developmental outcomes than the quantity of involvement (Cabrera et al., 2018; Cabrera & Volling, 2019).

Supportive paternal engagement contributes to long-term psychological well-being, including reduced depression, increased self-esteem, and improved academic performance (Sarkadi et al., 2008). Conversely, absence or emotionally distant fathering is linked to anxiety, attachment issues, and emotional dysregulation (Flouri & Buchanan, 2003). Authoritative fathering—marked by warmth and consistent structure—promotes emotional regulation, self-efficacy, and academic success (Baumrind, 1973; Hosokawa & Katsura, 2019), whereas authoritarian styles correlate with internalizing and externalizing problems unless moderated by cultural norms (Hart et al., 2005; Chao, 2001).

Permissive fathering, despite emotional closeness, can lead to poor self-regulation and academic underperformance due to lack of boundaries (Pinquart, 2016). Cultural context significantly shapes paternal roles, with authoritative parenting favored in Western societies and authoritarian approaches more accepted in collectivist cultures (Dwairy & Achoui, 2010; Bornstein, 2013).

Developmental timing also matters; early childhood paternal involvement supports cognitive and emotional development, while in adolescence, fathers function as emotional mentors, shaping identity and autonomy (Cabrera et al., 2007; Kenny & Sirin, 2006). Paternal mental health is critical, with untreated issues negatively affecting parenting behaviors and child outcomes (Ramchandani et al., 2008; Kane & Garber, 2004). In single-parent or divorced

households, high-quality father involvement remains a protective factor, buffering against developmental risks and promoting emotional and academic resilience (Fabricius & Luecken, 2007; Kelly & Emery, 2003).

2.3 Birth Order, Paternal Relationship, and Psychological Traits

Adler (1927) and Frank Sulloway (1996) proposed that birth order shapes personality and behavior. First-borns often adopt responsible, achievement-oriented roles due to early parental expectations, while later-borns tend to be more independent and creative. Sulloway emphasized that first-borns typically conform to family norms, while younger siblings challenge them to establish individuality.

First-borns frequently display leadership, perfectionism, and a strong sense of duty, influenced by parental pressure and expectations (Leman, 2009). This drive for excellence, while beneficial, can also lead to stress and anxiety (Miller, 2006). Their relationship with fathers is often marked by high expectations and shared responsibilities, creating both close bonds and potential tensions (Pleck & Hofferth, 2008). Although first-borns may struggle with anxiety, these challenges can foster resilience over time. Their ability to adapt stems from early exposure to responsibilities and stress (McHale et al., 2012). Societal expectations further shape their resilience, as they are often viewed as role models, which can both motivate and pressure them (Sulloway, 1996).

2.4 Gendered Comparison of Anxiety and Resilience in First-Born Adults

First-born children face distinct psychological pressures shaped by birth order and gender. These pressures influence how anxiety and resilience manifest in adulthood. Research shows that first-born daughters often carry emotional and caregiving burdens, while sons are driven by performance and leadership ideals (Sulloway, 1996; Leman, 2009). These differing expectations contribute to gendered expressions of anxiety and resilience. Anxiety tends to be higher in women, including first-born daughters, due to emotional socialization and family caregiving roles (Kuehner, 2017; Dunn & Kendrick, 1982). Sons, while less likely to express vulnerability, may still experience anxiety rooted in masculine ideals and achievement (Paulhus et al., 2009).

Resilience in first-born adults is shaped by how they navigate early responsibilities. Daughters often develop interpersonal resilience through emotional labor, while sons tend to build self-reliance through leadership roles (McHale et al., 2012). Coping mechanisms also differ—daughters favor emotion-focused strategies, while sons lean toward problem-solving (Leman, 2009; Kuehner, 2017).

Paternal parenting style further influences these outcomes. Authoritarian fathers may intensify anxiety, especially in daughters, while authoritative styles support balanced resilience across genders (Maccoby, 1992; Paulhus et al., 2009). Understanding these gendered dynamics offers deeper insight into first-born adults' mental health.

2.5 Paternal Parenting Styles and Their Influence on Anxiety and Resilience

Paternal parenting styles play a crucial role in shaping a child's emotional well-being. Authoritarian fathers—high in control but low in warmth—are linked to higher levels of anxiety, as their children often develop fear of failure and struggle with emotion regulation (Yap et al., 2014; McLeod et al., 2007). In contrast, authoritative fathers, who balance warmth and discipline, promote emotional stability and resilience, supporting secure attachment and adaptive coping (Hosokawa & Katsura, 2019).

Each style uniquely affects psychological outcomes. Authoritative parenting fosters autonomy and emotional strength, leading to lower anxiety and higher resilience (Pinquart, 2016). Authoritarian parenting is associated with emotional suppression and heightened anxiety, while permissive styles may lead to poor self-regulation due to lack of boundaries (Lamborn et al., 1991).

Supportive paternal involvement during early life transitions, such as school entry, is key to building resilience. Children with emotionally present fathers tend to show greater psychological flexibility and self-efficacy (Howard & Medway, 2004; Cooper et al., 2009). In contrast, early emotional neglect or inconsistent paternal behavior may contribute to long-term vulnerability to stress and anxiety (Kerns & Brumariu, 2014).

3. Methodology

3.1 Sample

The study sample consisted of 129 first-born adults with no upper age restriction. Inclusion criteria required participants to have had a father or consistent father figure actively involved in their lives for at least 10 years during childhood and adolescence (ages 6–18).

3.2 Measures

- a) Perceived Paternal Parenting Style: Measured using the Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ; Buri, 1991).
- b) Anxiety: Assessed through the Zung Self-Rating Anxiety Scale (Zung, 1971).
- c) Resilience: Measured by the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC 25; Connor & Davidson, 2003).

3.3 Procedure

Participants completed an online survey distributed via Google Forms. Informed consent was obtained digitally before participation. The survey took approximately 10–15 minutes to complete.

3.4 Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were calculated to summarize sample characteristics. One-way ANOVA assessed group differences across paternal parenting styles. Two-way ANOVA tested gender as a moderator. Pearson's correlation coefficients examined bivariate relationships, while multiple regression models assessed predictive associations between parenting style, anxiety, and resilience.

4. Results and Interpretation

4.1 Association Between Anxiety and Perceived Paternal Parenting Style

4.1.1 Descriptive Statistics

Mean anxiety scores (Table 1) varied notably across the three paternal parenting styles:

Parenting Style	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)
Authoritarian	51.59	13.44
Permissive	43.10	9.60
Authoritative	40.28	8.82

Participants who perceived their fathers as authoritarian reported the highest anxiety levels, while those with authoritative fathers reported the lowest, suggesting a protective effect of authoritative parenting.

4.1.2 ANOVA and Effect Size

A one-way ANOVA revealed a statistically significant difference in anxiety scores across the three groups: $F(2, 123) = 13.419, p < .001$

The effect size, measured by eta-squared ($\eta^2 = .179$), represents a large effect, indicating that approximately 18% of the variance in anxiety scores can be explained by paternal parenting style.

4.1.3 Assumption Testing

Levene's Test for homogeneity of variance was **significant** ($p = .010$), suggesting unequal variances across groups. Despite this violation, the ANOVA was considered robust for the sample size, and post hoc comparisons were conducted.

4.1.4 Post Hoc Comparisons (Tukey HSD)

- a) Authoritarian vs Authoritative: Significant, $p < .001$ (Mean Difference = +11.31)

b) Authoritarian vs Permissive: Significant, $p = .004$ (Mean Difference = +8.48)

c) Permissive vs Authoritative: Not significant, $p = .536$

These results confirm that authoritarian paternal parenting is associated with significantly higher anxiety than both permissive and authoritative styles.

Means Plots

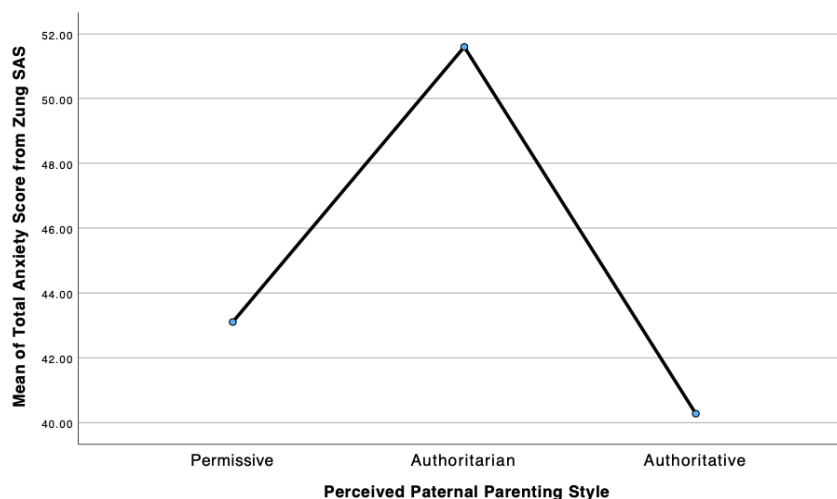


Figure 1: *Total Anxiety Score and Perceived Paternal Parenting Style*

4.1.5. Interpretation

As reflected in the statistical outcomes, individuals who perceived their fathers as authoritarian experienced significantly elevated anxiety levels. This finding is consistent with existing literature, which links rigid, controlling parenting styles to greater psychological distress. In contrast, authoritative parenting—characterized by warmth and structure—appears to buffer against anxiety.

4.2 Association Between Resilience and Perceived Paternal Parenting Style

4.2.1 Descriptive Statistics: The mean resilience scores (Table 2) across the three perceived paternal parenting styles were as follows:

Style	M	SD
Authoritative	74.76	13.47
Permissive	74.34	15.70
Authoritarian	67.54	16.80

Resilience was found to be highest among individuals who perceived their fathers as authoritative, closely followed by those with permissive paternal figures. In contrast, those who perceived their fathers as authoritarian reported the lowest resilience levels.

4.2.2 ANOVA and Effect Size

A one-way ANOVA revealed a statistically significant difference in resilience scores across the three parenting style groups: $F(2, 123) = 3.201, p = .044$

The effect size, eta-squared ($\eta^2 = .049$), suggests a small to moderate effect, indicating that paternal parenting style explains approximately 5% of the variance in resilience scores. While this effect is weaker than that observed for anxiety, it still reflects a meaningful association.

4.2.3 Assumption Testing

Levene's Test for homogeneity of variance was non-significant ($p = .175$), confirming that the assumption of equal variances was met for the ANOVA.

4.2.4 Post Hoc Comparisons (Tukey HSD)

No pairwise comparisons reached statistical significance at the $p < .05$ level. However, the difference between the authoritative and authoritarian groups approached significance ($p = .060$), indicating a potential trend worth noting.

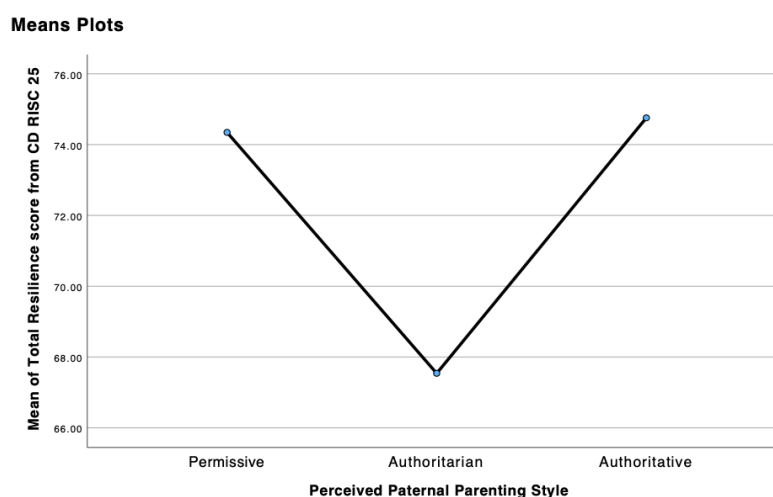


Figure 2: Total Resilience Score and Perceived Paternal Parenting Style

4.2.5 Interpretation: Although the pairwise comparisons did not yield statistically significant results, the overall ANOVA suggests that perceived paternal parenting style does influence resilience. Specifically, individuals with authoritative or permissive fathers tend to exhibit higher resilience, whereas those with authoritarian fathers show lower resilience. These findings are consistent with existing literature highlighting the role of warmth and support in fostering psychological strengths, such as resilience, even if the observed effects are modest.

4.3 Evaluating the Moderating Role of Gender in the Relationship Between Perceived Paternal Parenting Style and Anxiety

A two-way ANOVA (Table 3) was conducted to examine whether gender moderates the relationship between perceived paternal parenting style and anxiety levels.

Effect	F-value	p-value	η^2	Significance
Main Effect of Parenting Style	F (2, 117) = 12.923	p < .001	.177	Significant
Main Effect of Gender	F (1, 117) = 1.285	p = .259	.011	Not significant
Interaction Effect (Parenting Style × Gender)	F (2, 117) = 1.516	p = .224	.025	Not significant

Interpretation: Perceived paternal parenting style had a significant impact on anxiety scores, with a large effect size, regardless of the participant's gender. However, gender alone did not significantly influence anxiety, nor did it moderate the relationship between parenting style and anxiety. This indicates that the anxiety-provoking effects of paternal parenting styles—particularly authoritarian—are consistent across genders.

4.4 Evaluating the Moderating Role of Gender in the Relationship Between Perceived Paternal Parenting Style and Resilience

A two-way ANOVA (Table 4) was also conducted to assess whether gender moderates the effect of paternal parenting style on resilience.

Effect	F-value	p-value	η^2	Significance
Main Effect of Parenting Style	F(2, 117) = 3.307	p = .040	$\eta^2 = .052$	Significant
Main Effect of Gender	F(1, 117) = 5.618	p = .019	$\eta^2 = .045$	Significant
Interaction Effect (Parenting Style × Gender)	F(2, 117) = 0.024	p = .977		Not significant

Interpretation: Both perceived paternal parenting style and gender independently influenced resilience levels, each contributing a small to moderate effect. However, their interaction was not significant, suggesting that while males and females may differ in overall resilience, the impact of parenting style on resilience does not vary by gender. In other words, gender does not moderate the relationship between paternal parenting style and resilience.

4.5 Correlation Between Anxiety and Resilience

- $r = -.546, p < .001 \rightarrow$ Moderate Negative Correlation

A moderate negative correlation was found between anxiety and resilience. The relationship is both negative and statistically significant, meaning higher levels of resilience are associated

with lower levels of anxiety. This supports the well-established notion that resilience acts as a protective factor against emotional distress.

4.6 Correlation Between Parenting Styles, Anxiety, and Resilience

Parenting Style	Correlation (r)	p-value
Permissive	-0.479	.009
Authoritarian	-0.518	<.001
Authoritative	-0.543	<.001

Across all parenting styles (Table 5), a significant negative correlation between anxiety and resilience was observed. **Higher resilience consistently correlates with lower anxiety**, with moderate-to-strong negative correlations found in each parenting style. This reinforces the idea that resilience acts as a protective factor, mitigating emotional distress, regardless of the parenting style.

4.7 Linear Regression (Predicting Resilience from Anxiety)

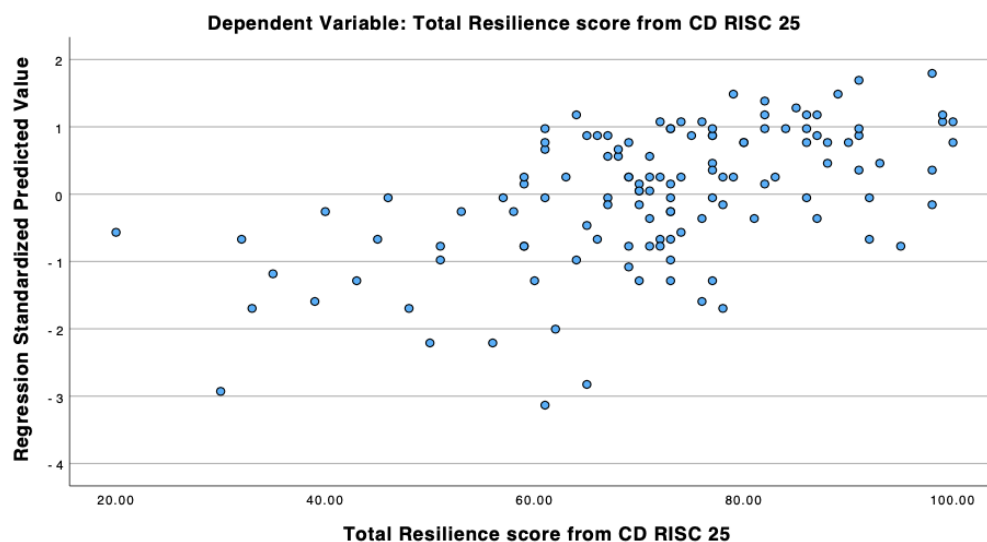


Figure 3: Scatter Plot- Total Resilience Score and Total Anxiety Score

- $R^2 = 0.298 \rightarrow$ **Approximately 30% of the variance in resilience is explained by anxiety.**

Regression Coefficients

a) Constant (β_0) = 103.78 (β_0) = 103.78 (β_0) = 103.78

b) Anxiety (β_1) = -0.704, $p < .001$ (β_1) = -0.704, $p < .001$ (β_1) = -0.704, $p < .001$

Model Significance: $F=52.68$, $p < .001$

For each 1-point increase in anxiety, resilience decreases by 0.704 points. Anxiety was found to be a significant negative predictor of resilience, with the model explaining 29.8% of

the variance in resilience, indicating a substantial predictive relationship between anxiety and resilience.

Inference: The findings show a consistent negative correlation between anxiety and resilience, with higher resilience linked to lower anxiety across all parenting styles. Additionally, anxiety significantly predicts resilience, with a substantial amount of variance in resilience explained by anxiety levels. This supports the view that resilience serves as a protective factor, helping to buffer against emotional distress.

4.8 Key Findings of Results

The present study investigated the association between perceived paternal parenting styles and two critical psychological outcomes: anxiety and resilience among first-born adults, while also examining the moderating role of gender and the interplay between anxiety and resilience.

The findings revealed several key insights:

- a) Perceived paternal parenting style significantly influenced anxiety and resilience levels in first-born adults. Participants who perceived their fathers as authoritarian reported significantly higher levels of anxiety and lower levels of resilience compared to those who perceived their fathers as authoritative. This supports prior research suggesting that rigid and emotionally distant paternal behaviors are linked to negative psychological outcomes, whereas supportive yet structured parenting fosters emotional well-being.
- b) Authoritative paternal parenting was associated with the most favorable psychological outcomes, characterized by lower anxiety and higher resilience. This aligns with established literature that identifies authoritative parenting as the optimal style for promoting autonomy, emotional regulation, and adaptability.
- c) Permissive paternal parenting showed more nuanced effects. While it did not significantly differ from authoritative parenting in terms of anxiety or resilience, it was generally associated with moderate levels of both outcomes, suggesting that warmth alone may not be sufficient for fostering resilience or reducing anxiety in the absence of appropriate boundaries.
- d) Gender did not moderate the relationship between paternal parenting style and either anxiety or resilience. However, gender had a small but significant main effect on resilience, indicating that male and female participants may experience and express resilience differently, even though the interaction with parenting style was non-significant.

- e) A significant negative correlation was found between anxiety and resilience ($r = -.546$, $p < .001$), indicating that individuals with higher resilience tend to report lower levels of anxiety. This inverse relationship was consistent across all three paternal parenting style subgroups—authoritative ($r = -.543$), authoritarian ($r = -.518$), and permissive ($r = -.479$)—demonstrating the stability of this pattern regardless of parenting context.
- f) Regression analysis confirmed that anxiety is a significant negative predictor of resilience, explaining approximately 30% of the variance ($R^2 = .298$). This suggests that interventions targeting anxiety reduction may simultaneously support resilience development, and vice versa.
- g) No significant interaction was observed between parenting style and gender for either anxiety or resilience. This finding indicates that the influence of perceived paternal parenting style on psychological outcomes is largely consistent across male and female first-borns.

4.9 Evaluation of Hypotheses

According to the results obtained through statistical analysis, the following conclusions about the hypothesis can be made:

4.9.1 Main Hypothesis (H1)

There is a significant association between perceived paternal parenting styles (authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive) and psychological outcomes (anxiety and resilience) among first-born adults.

- a) The null hypothesis $H0_1$ (There is no significant association between perceived paternal parenting styles and anxiety or resilience in first-born adults) is rejected.
- b) Consequently, the results show that the alternate hypothesis $H1_1$ (Perceived paternal parenting styles are significantly associated with anxiety and resilience in first-born adults) is accepted.

4.9.2 Moderation Hypothesis (H2)

Gender moderates the relationship between perceived paternal parenting styles and psychological outcomes (anxiety and resilience).

- a) The null hypothesis $H0_2$ (Gender does not significantly moderate the relationship between perceived paternal parenting styles and anxiety or resilience) is accepted.
- b) Thus, as the results suggest the alternate hypothesis $H1_2$ (Gender significantly moderates the relationship between perceived paternal parenting styles and anxiety or resilience) is rejected.

4.9.3 Interplay Hypothesis (H3)

There is a significant inverse relationship between anxiety and resilience, and this relationship is influenced by the perceived paternal parenting style

- a) The null hypothesis H_{03} (There is no significant relationship between anxiety and resilience, nor does perceived paternal parenting style influence this relationship) is rejected.
- b) Alternative hypothesis H_{13} (There is a significant inverse relationship between anxiety and resilience, and this relationship varies based on the perceived paternal parenting style) is accepted.

Based on the findings, the study provides robust support for the main hypothesis, confirming a significant association between perceived paternal parenting styles and the psychological outcomes of anxiety and resilience in first-born adults. Participants who perceived their fathers as authoritative reported lower anxiety and higher resilience, while those perceiving authoritarian fathering reported the opposite. These outcomes align with existing literature emphasizing the psychological benefits of balanced, supportive, and structured paternal behavior. The moderation hypothesis was not supported, as gender did not significantly influence the relationship between paternal parenting style and psychological outcomes. However, gender did show a small but significant main effect on resilience, suggesting nuanced gender-based differences in resilience expression. Furthermore, a strong and consistent inverse relationship between anxiety and resilience was observed across all parenting style groups, reinforcing the idea that interventions targeting one construct may positively impact the other. These results collectively validate the theoretical framework of the study and highlight the enduring psychological impact of paternal parenting styles during early developmental years.

5. Discussion

5.1 Interpretation of Findings in Relation to Existing Literature

The present study found that perceived paternal parenting styles significantly influence anxiety and resilience among first-born adults. Specifically, authoritative paternal parenting—characterized by high warmth and high control—was associated with lower anxiety and higher resilience. This aligns with previous studies (Baumrind, 1967; Lamb, 2010; Hosokawa & Katsura, 2019) that highlight the benefits of authoritative parenting for emotional development and adaptive functioning. Conversely, authoritarian parenting, marked by strict discipline and

low emotional warmth, was found to be associated with elevated anxiety and diminished resilience, consistent with research linking controlling parenting to internalizing disorders (Yap et al., 2014; Milevsky et al., 2007).

Interestingly, permissive paternal parenting did not significantly differ from authoritative parenting in its impact on anxiety or resilience, though it tended to produce moderate outcomes. This suggests that while emotional warmth may protect against extreme psychological distress, its benefits may be limited in the absence of structure and boundaries.

Furthermore, a moderate negative correlation between anxiety and resilience was observed across all parenting styles, supporting the notion that resilience serves as a buffer against anxiety (Campbell-Sills et al., 2006). Gender was found to influence resilience independently but did not moderate the relationship between parenting style and psychological outcomes, suggesting that paternal influence operates relatively uniformly across male and female first-borns.

5.2 Theoretical and Practical Implications

The findings affirm and expand Baumrind's parenting style theory by applying it specifically to paternal figures and perceived parenting. They reinforce attachment theory, which posits that parental warmth and responsiveness are critical to the development of secure attachment and emotional resilience (Bowlby, 1969).

Practically, the study has implications for family-based interventions, suggesting that paternal behaviors perceived as authoritative can be protective against psychological distress. Parenting programs should emphasize the importance of emotional availability alongside consistent boundaries, particularly for fathers. Clinical psychologists and counselors should also consider clients' subjective perceptions of their early paternal relationships as these may shape current emotional coping mechanisms and vulnerability to anxiety.

5.3 Cultural Considerations

The perception and impact of paternal parenting styles are deeply influenced by cultural norms. In collectivist cultures, authoritarian behaviors may be interpreted not as coercive but as caring and morally guided (Dwairy & Achoui, 2010). This contextual nuance is crucial in interpreting the findings, especially in multicultural societies where expectations around fatherhood and obedience differ.

The sample in this study likely reflects a blend of individualistic and collectivist cultural interpretations, particularly in the Indian context where traditional gender roles and paternal authority remain prevalent. Therefore, future research should explore how cultural lenses mediate the psychological outcomes of perceived paternal behavior.

5.4 Strengths and Limitations of the Study

A notable strength of this study is its focus on perceived paternal parenting styles in first-born adults, a relatively underexplored demographic in parenting literature. Additionally, the use of standardized, validated tools and robust statistical techniques strengthens the reliability of the findings.

However, several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the reliance on self-reported data introduces the risk of recall bias and subjective distortion. Second, the cross-sectional design limits causal interpretations. Third, the generalizability of findings may be constrained by the sampling method (convenience and snowball sampling) and the online nature of data collection.

5.5 Recommendations for Future Research

Future studies should adopt longitudinal designs to assess how perceived paternal parenting styles influence psychological outcomes over time. Including multi-informant perspectives (e.g., fathers' self-reports, sibling comparisons) could provide a more nuanced understanding of perceptual discrepancies. Additionally, expanding the sample to include non-first-borns and participants from diverse cultural backgrounds would enhance the generalizability and cultural sensitivity of the findings.

6. Conclusion

This study found that perceived paternal parenting styles significantly impact psychological outcomes in first-born adults. Authoritative parenting was linked to lower anxiety and higher resilience, while authoritarian parenting was associated with higher anxiety and lower resilience. Permissive parenting showed moderate effects. Gender had a small effect on resilience but did not moderate the overall relationship between paternal style and psychological outcomes. A strong inverse relationship between anxiety and resilience was observed, with anxiety significantly predicting lower resilience.

6.1 Contribution to the Field of Psychology

The research contributes to developmental and clinical psychology by highlighting the long-term psychological effects of perceived paternal parenting in first-born adults. It reinforces the need to examine father-child dynamics and subjective parenting perceptions, thereby broadening the scope of attachment and parenting style research. The findings also underscore the complexity of birth order effects on adult mental health.

6.2 Implications for Therapy, Counselling, and Parental Guidance

For mental health practitioners, understanding clients' early paternal relationships can be crucial in conceptualizing anxiety and resilience issues. Therapeutic interventions may benefit from exploring how clients internalized paternal behaviors and how these perceptions continue to influence their coping styles. For counselors and educators, the findings advocate for increased paternal involvement that balances structure with emotional availability. Parenting workshops and guidance programs should incorporate modules that target fathers, emphasizing the impact of their parenting on long-term psychological well-being, especially for first-borns.

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