

# Relationship between emotional warmth dimension in parenting styles and overall well-being in adulthood: The mediating role of psychological resilience

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## Abstract:

To investigate the emotional warmth dimension in parental parenting styles during childhood, as a life experience, its impact on overall happiness in adulthood, and the mediating role of psychological resilience. Method: This study focused on working adults and collected 152 valid samples using Questionnaire Star. The distribution differences of parental parenting styles, psychological resilience, and overall happiness in adulthood were analyzed based on gender, age, origin, education level, primary caregiver occupation, and primary caregiver education level. The relationship between parental parenting styles in the emotional warmth dimension and overall happiness in adulthood, as well as the mediating role of psychological resilience, were also analyzed. Result: There was a significant difference in the distribution of parental parenting styles during childhood in the source area ( $F=4.848$ ,  $P=0.009<0.01$ ), but there was no significant difference in other demographic variables (gender, education level, primary caregiver education level, and occupation). Parenting style of parents was not related to psychological resilience or overall happiness in adulthood; however, there was a significant positive correlation between overall happiness and psychological resilience (correlation coefficient value of 0.165). The mediating effect of psychological resilience is not significant.

**Keywords:** Parenting style of parents; Psychological resilience; Happiness; Adult

## 1. Introduction

Parenting plays an important role in children's

growth. Perris, a Swedish psychologist, began to explore parenting styles in 1950 and equated them with parenting behavior. Sears et al. (1957) argued that

parenting style is an interactive relationship. Darling and Steinberg (1993) defined parenting style as the collection of parents' attitudes and emotions in the process of raising and educating children. It includes not only the orientation behavior of performing parenting duties, but also nonverbal communication styles and emotional interactions, and can remain relatively stable in different situations.

Domestic scholars also put forward their own opinions on parenting styles. Zhang Wenxin, Lin Chongde et al. (1998) believe that parenting style is a relatively stable educational method and a comprehensive educational way of parents' various parenting behavior characteristics. Zhang Song (1999) proposed that parenting style is a collection of emotions and value orientations, which acts on the interactive relationship between parents and children and reflects children's personality characteristics. Chen Chen (2002) believes that parenting style includes various characteristics of parenting behavior, and it is a method and skill commonly used by parents in raising their children [1].

Happiness is a comprehensive psychological index, which is used to measure an individual's quality of life, thus reflecting an individual's social function and their ability to adapt well [2].

Psychological elasticity refers to an individual's ability to maintain and restore the health of physical and mental functions when facing difficulties, setbacks, losses, difficulties and other situations, and it is an individual's ability to develop and adapt well in adversity. Many studies have shown that psychological resilience has a significant predictive effect on subjective well-being [3].

In the past, the research on parenting style mainly focused on the influence on individual student age, that is, the research on the influence on the growth of college students, such as Research on the Relationship between Family Parenting Style, Parent-child Attachment and Sexual Mental Health of Secondary Vocational School Students, The Influence of Parenting Style on College Students' Coping Style and Subjective Well-being, etc., but there is little research on the influence of parenting style on individual happiness after growing up, entering social work and even starting a family. In recent years, one of the important reasons for the sharp decline in fertility rate is the "high cost" of raising children, which is not only the economic cost, but also the emotional cost invested by parents in raising children. Children's upbringing, punishment or encouragement? Strict or tolerant? How important is it for parents to give their children emotional warmth when they are busy with work? How will it affect children's psychological resilience? Does it have an important impact on children's happiness in the future?

In addition, the theory of self-determination holds that

autonomous support is a basic need of human beings, and the development process runs through the individual's life, but it has different contents and manifestations at different stages of development [4]. Does parenting style have an impact on children in adulthood? Does it affect their overall happiness in adulthood? This is what needs to be clarified at present, and it is also the significance of this study.

## 2. Objects and methods

### 2.1 Objects

In this study, adults aged 31-50 who have been working for many years were selected as the research objects. The Questionnaire Star questionnaire was used, and the answers were distributed only via WeChat. A total of 260 questionnaires were distributed and 152 valid questionnaires were collected. Among them, 58 (38%) were males and 94 (62%) were females. The survey was conducted in August 2024.

The research participants have been in society for many years and have rich life experience.

### 2.2 Methods

#### 2.2.1 "Parenting Style Inventory (EMBU)"

EMBU (Egna Minnen av Barndoms Uppfostran—own memories of parental rearing practices in childhood) was jointly compiled by C. Perris from the Department of Psychiatry at Umea University, Sweden, in 1980 to evaluate parental attitudes and behaviors. The Chinese version of EMBU [5] revised by Yue Dongmei et al. of China Medical University in 1993, was used to evaluate parents' parenting attitudes and behaviors. The questionnaire involves 6 factors (emotional warmth, understanding; Punishment, severity; Excessive interference; Preference; Rejection, denial; Overprotection), a total of 66 questions. Studies have shown that the dimension of "emotional warmth" has a high impact on adults' psychological resilience and happiness. Therefore, this study decided to conduct an investigation and research from the dimension of "emotional warmth and understanding", with a total of 19 questions, one of which was reverse-scored. Considering the development status of China in the past few decades, many children could not live with their parents since childhood but grow up with their grandparents or maternal grandparents. Therefore, "parental upbringing" is adjusted to "main parenting upbringing".

#### 2.2.2 Revised Chinese version of General Well-being Scale (GWB)

Duan Jianhua in China revised the overall subjective

well-being scale, including 25 questions, of which the total score obtained from questions 1 to 18 is the measure of happiness [6]. The national norm score is 75 for men and 71 for women, and the higher the score, the higher the happiness.

### 2.2.3 Psychological Resilience Questionnaire

The revised psychological resilience scale compiled by Xiao Nan and Zhang Jianxin (2007) according to Connor and David-son (2003) [7] is adopted, which includes three dimensions of tenacity, self-improvement and optimism, with a total of 25 topics. The internal consistency  $\alpha$  coefficient of the scale is 0.91. The scale has good reliability and validity in China, with a reliability coefficient of 0.928, which is greater than 0.9, and the reliability quality of the research data is very high.

## 2.3 Statistical processing

In this study, the initial EXCEL statistical data came from the questionnaire star survey software, and then the ini-

tial EXCEL data was read by SPSSAU, and the data was preliminarily edited and processed. The main statistical methods included analysis of variance, correlation analysis, linear regression analysis and mediation analysis.

## 3. Results

### 3.1 Differences in demographic variables of parental rearing style

The total number of subjects in this survey was 152. According to the measurement results of parental rearing style, t-test and analysis of variance showed (see the table below) that The anthropological variables (gender, respondent's education level, main caregiver's occupation and education level) showed no significant differences in parental rearing style, psychological resilience, or overall happiness ( $p > 0.05$ ). However, samples from different source areas showed a trend towards significance in parenting styles ( $P = 0.09$ ), as shown in Table 1 below:

**Table 1 Analysis of Variance Results**

	Childhood Residence (Average Value $\pm$ Standard Deviation)			F	P
	Rural Area (n=57)	City(n=70)	Town(n=25)		
Parenting Style	2.70 $\pm$ 0.53	2.73 $\pm$ 0.44	3.04 $\pm$ 0.42	4.848	0.009 * *
Psychological Resilience	3.36 $\pm$ 1.04	3.29 $\pm$ 1.02	3.17 $\pm$ 1.09	0.29	0.009
Overall Well-being	2.76 $\pm$ 0.30	2.79 $\pm$ 0.26	2.84 $\pm$ 0.25	0.607	0.009

\*  $p < 0.05$  \*\*  $p < 0.01$

### 3.2 Relationship between parenting style and adult well-being

Correlation analysis is used to study the correlation between parenting style, psychological resilience and overall happiness, and Pearson correlation coefficient is used to express the strength of the correlation. The specific analysis can be seen from Table 2 below:

The correlation value between overall happiness and par-

enting style is -0.154, which is close to 0, and the p value is  $0.058 > 0.05$ , thus indicating that there is no significant correlation between overall happiness and parenting style. The relationship between overall happiness and psychological resilience is 0.165, and it shows a significant level of 0.05, thus showing that there is a significant positive correlation between overall happiness and psychological resilience.

**Table 2 Results of Pearson correlation analysis**

	Average Value	Standard Deviation	Overall Well-being	Parenting Style	Psychological Resilience
Overall Well-being	2.786	0.273	1		
Parenting Style	2.769	0.485	-0.154	1	
Psychological Resilience	3.298	1.031	0.165 *	-0.035	1

\*  $p < 0.05$  \*\*  $p < 0.01$

### 3.3 Analysis of the mediating role of psychological resilience

The results of the mediation effect test in Table 3 below

show that the mediation effect of psychological resilience is not obvious.

**Table 3 Results of analysis of mediating effect of psychological resilience**

	c Total effect	a	b	a*b Intermediary effect value	a*b (Boot SE)	a*b Z	a*b P	a*b (95% Boot CI)	c direct effect	conclusion
Parenting Style=> Psychological Resilience=> Overall Well-being	-0.087	-0.073	0.042*	-0.003	0.013	-0.238	0.812	-0.034~0.020	-0.084	not obvious.

## 4. Discussion

### 4.1 Demographic analysis of emotional warmth dimensions of parenting styles

The results of this study showed that there were differences in parenting styles among samples from different sources. The degree of emotional warmth in parental upbringing is the highest among the groups living in towns and the lowest among those living in rural areas during their childhood. This may be related to China's rapid urbanization process in the past few decades. In the mid-1990s, China's urbanization rate was only 30%. After about 30 years of development, by 2023, the urbanization rate has reached 66.16% [8]. More and more people enjoy the dividends of the rapid urbanization process. Compared with rural life, urban residents have a higher quality of life and higher optimism. Such a relatively positive living state also makes parents have the willingness and strength to give their children more emotional warmth in the process of raising their children.

### 4.2 The relationship between emotional warmth dimension of parenting style, psychological resilience and overall well-being in adulthood

The results of this study show that there is no correlation between the emotional warmth dimension of parenting style and the overall happiness in adulthood, which is inconsistent with previous research results [9]. It is worth mentioning that previous studies mostly focused on college students aged 18-24, which is inconsistent with this research group. First of all, the group in this study is more mature and has more stable emotions, and the differences in emotions are not as obvious as those of young people. Secondly, when this study group recalled their childhood parenting styles, the accuracy of the results was not as good as that of the young group because of the long time; Most importantly, most of the study groups are parents, and they can deeply understand the hardships of parents.

Therefore, when answering the questionnaire, they do not rule out emotional factors, and they are more inclusive of the emotional warmth provided by parents.

In addition, the results of this study also show that there is a significant positive correlation between psychological resilience and overall happiness in adulthood. Individuals with high level of psychological resilience can better deal with setbacks and difficulties encountered, experience more positive emotions, and have a relatively high level of overall happiness. However, there was no obvious correlation between childhood parenting style and psychological resilience.

Nevertheless, this research result is also of great practical significance. The research results of different groups make us realize that the overall happiness in adulthood is not absolutely related to the emotional warmth dimension in childhood parenting style, and the psychological construction and emotional introspection in adulthood also have a great influence on the overall happiness. In view of this, parents don't have to bear too much emotional burden when educating their children, and calmly accept their occasional emotional loss of control towards their children.

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