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The Role of Parental Psychological Resilience in Predicting Children's Emotional Competence in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

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Abstract

The current study aimed to investigate the relationship between parental psychological resilience and emotional competence in their children. It also aimed to reveal the significance of differences in parents' psychological resilience according to the variables of parents (father/mother), parental age, and the interaction between them. It also aimed to identify the possibility of predicting children's emotional competence through parents' psychological resilience. The study was conducted on a sample of 385 fathers and mothers, randomly selected. The study followed a descriptive, correlational, causal and comparative approach, using the Psychological Resilience Scale (prepared by van der Meer et al., 2018) and the Emotional Competence Scale (prepared by Nikčević-Milković, Jurković, & Jerković, 2020). A significant correlation exists between parental resilience and their children's emotional competence. There are significant differences in parental resilience according to the parental variables (father/mother), parental age, and the interaction between them, favouring mothers and younger age groups. The results also revealed the predictive power of parental resilience in detecting emotional competence in children. In light of the findings, the study recommended the importance of integrating the concepts of psychological resilience into the content of family and awareness programs offered by educational and community institutions, with special attention given to mothers to support their educational roles. It also recommended developing sustainable psychological support programs targeting the older age group of parents. Further qualitative research should also be conducted to explore the mediating variables that may contribute to explaining the relationship between parental resilience and children's emotional competence.

Keywords: Parenting, Psychological Resilience, Emotional Competence.

Introduction

The family is considered a safe haven for children, fostering values and principles within them, and building emotional bonds that enhance psychosocial support. Through family interactions, children learn to understand emotions and many skills for dealing with life situations and how to deal with and overcome difficulties. Therefore, the family is not just a social unit; it is a fundamental educational, cultural, and moral institution that contributes to shaping the future of children and society as a whole.

Parents bear a great responsibility in raising their children. In order to fulfil their role and be a good role model for their children, they must start with themselves and continue to develop themselves and enhance their skills and knowledge. As Coyne et al. (2021) pointed out, when an emergency occurs on an airplane, parents are asked to put on their own oxygen masks first so they can effectively support their children and maintain their safety. During this difficult time, parents must be taught how to take care of themselves first so they can care for their children in

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the face of difficulties.

One of the skills that parents should possess is psychological resilience, which is an integral part of mental health and behavioural effectiveness. It manifests in an individual's ability to focus on the current situation and take appropriate action to achieve goals, thus being prepared to face undesirable and challenging events (Alrefi et al., 2020).

Since children, and to some extent adolescents, do not always possess the neurological and cognitive abilities necessary to regulate their emotions on their own, they often rely on external resources, such as parents, for assistance (Morris et al., 2017).

Attachment theory posits that children's emotional competence is influenced by their relationships with parents. Children learn to express their emotions by observing close people, and their emotion regulation develops within the context of these relationships. Children who enjoy a secure attachment with resilient parents tend to express their emotions appropriately and manage their negative emotions in difficult situations (Mortazavizadeh et al., 2022).

Literature Review

Psychological Resilience

Psychological resilience is a positive term for life and mental health. It refers to an individual's ability to adapt psychologically to difficult situations and their constant pursuit of what is best for them. It is a type of positive adaptation that relies on the individual's ability to confront threats and difficulties (Hindawi, 2023).

Psychological resilience is also defined as an individual's ability to effectively confront crises and various stressors in different life situations, overcome and recover from their negative impacts, accept others and interact with them positively, and adapt to life's circumstances and stressful contexts (Helmy, 2019).

Parental psychological resilience means that parents accept negative thoughts, emotions, and desires related to their children, while continuing to behave in ways consistent with effective parenting. Parental psychological resilience encompasses cognitive detachment, committed action, and acceptance. Cognitive detachment refers to parents' ability to consciously separate their negative feelings and thoughts from their parental behaviour so that their feelings or thoughts do not control their behaviour. Committed action means that parents can fully respect their children's wishes and allow them to maintain their independence. This may increase parents' anxiety about their children, but at the same time, it contributes to their children's effective regulation. Acceptance refers to parents' ability to accept their distressing feelings and thoughts during parenting (Moore & Burke, 2015). Resilience is also understood as the process of parents' adaptation to difficult family situations and the ability to cope with stress, with "control" being a particularly important component of resilience (Shapovalenko & Ivanova, 2023). Resilience consists of a set of skills that individuals can use to respond to difficult thoughts, feelings, experiences, and challenges (e.g., acceptance, awareness of the present moment, self as a background, cognitive deconstruction, maintaining connection to values, and committed action) (Daks et al., 2022). Resilience also includes openness to internal experiences (thoughts, feelings, memories) and modifying behaviour to meet the demands of the situation in line with one's values (Landi et al., 2021). Sumeida (2019) divided psychological resilience into five dimensions: emotional balance and the extent to which an individual is aware of his or her emotions; self-efficacy, which is represented by an individual's confidence in his or her ability 3858 The Role of Parental Psychological Resilience in Predicting

to solve problems and recognize his or her strengths and weaknesses; social relationships, which include building and maintaining successful relationships; patience and the ability to endure difficult circumstances; and finally, problem-solving, which involves considering these problems from all angles and searching for appropriate solutions.

Emotional Competence

Emotional competence refers to the ability to recognize, use, analyse, and manage emotions and emotional information. It is a highly important ability in the modern world. Many scholars today suggest that an individual's emotional competence is more important than their IQ and is a stronger predictor of an individual's success, relationship quality, and happiness (Singh et al., 2022).

Emotional competence is also defined as a system of personal and social competencies and skills that reflects an individual's ability to perceive their own emotions, express them positively, and recognize the emotions of others, the motional competence or skill in dealing with them, psychological and practical empathy with them, and the ability to self-motivation to accomplish this task (Kurdi, 2023). It is also defined as the ability to display internal emotions and feelings appropriately. It is regarded as a social skill that contributes to interpreting and understanding one's own emotions and those of others (Khan, & Bhat, 2018).

Emotional competence skills can be listed as mentioned by (Khan, 2017). (Marzuki, 2007) as follows:

- A) The skill of understanding others' emotions, based on contextual and expressive cues that have a degree of cultural consistency with regard to their emotional meaning.
- b) The skill of using the emotional vocabulary and expressions commonly available in one's subculture, and at more mature levels, the skill of linking emotions to social roles.
- c) The ability to emotionally share or empathize with the emotional experiences of others.
- d) Awareness of one's own emotional state, including the possibility of experiencing multiple emotions, and awareness that one may not be fully aware of one's own emotional state.
- e) The skill of understanding that one's emotional expressive behaviour may affect another person.
- f) The ability to develop emotional self-efficacy, such that one perceives oneself as feeling the way one would like to feel and is emotionally balanced.

Numerous previous studies have emphasized the importance of psychological resilience, flexible parenting styles, and emotional competence in children. For example, Shreya & Sharma (2024) revealed a positive relationship between supportive (authoritative) parenting styles and increased levels of emotional intelligence, while authoritarian or neglectful parenting styles were associated with lower emotional intelligence, especially among males. Muntaha et al. (2024) noted that Authoritative parenting styles were associated with higher levels of emotional intelligence in children, while authoritarian and permissive parenting styles were associated with lower levels of emotional intelligence. The results underscore the importance of adopting authoritarian parenting styles to enhance children's emotional intelligence, which contributes to improving their social and emotional well-being. In the same context, Mortazavizadeh et al. (2022) conducted a study that indicated the role and importance of parenting styles in developing emotional competence.

The study of Ren et al. (2022) showed that children's emotional regulation plays a mediating role in the relationship between parents' psychological resilience and children's behavioural problems. The greater the parents' psychological resilience, the better the children's ability to regulate their emotions, which contributed to reducing their behavioural problems. Also, a study by Haslam et al. (2020) showed a relationship between parenting styles and emotion regulation. Authoritarian parenting shows a negative effect on emotion regulation.

Mohamad and Abd-Alkader (2018) conducted a study that found a positive relationship between emotional competence and psychological resilience, and gender differences in psychological resilience in favour of females. In the context of the impact of parenting styles, Morris et al. (2017) conducted a study that revealed that parents who practice warm and supportive parenting styles (such as authoritative parenting) contribute to improving children's emotional regulation, while authoritarian or permissive parenting styles were associated with lower levels of emotional regulation. The results also emphasized the importance of the emotional climate within the family, as safe, supportive, and flexible relationships enhance children's ability to express and regulate their emotions effectively.

It is clear from previous studies that the significant role that parenting style plays in children's emotions. The results generally emphasized the importance of the emotional climate within the family, as safe and flexible relationships contribute to enhancing children's ability to express and regulate their emotions effectively. Given the importance of parental psychological resilience and its significant and clear impact on children's mental health and psychological and emotional development, we conducted this study.

Study Problem

The problem of the study is defined by answering the following questions:

- 1. What is the level of psychological resilience among parents?
- 2. What is the level of emotional competence among children, from their parents' perspective?
- 3. Is there a relationship between parental psychological resilience and their children's emotional competence?
- 4. Are there significant differences in psychological resilience according to the parental variables (father/mother), age, and interactions between them?
- 5. Can emotional competence in children be predicted based on the level of psychological resilience in their parents?

Method and Materials

Study approach: In light of the nature of the study variables and its objectives, the researcher used the descriptive, correlational, causal and comparative approach to achieve the study objectives and answer its questions.

Study sample: The random probability sampling method was used, with a stratified random sampling type for both genders: fathers and mothers from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The following table shows the distribution of sample members according to the various variables:

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Variable		Frequency	Percentage	
Parent	Father	178	46.2	
	Mother	207	53.8	
	From 20 to 29 years	38	9.9	
Age	From 30 to 39 years	109	28.3 32.7	
	From 40 to 49 years	126		
	From 50 to 59 years	67	17.4	
	From 60 to 69 years	45	11.7	
	Less than 10 years	45	11.7	
Duration of marriage	From 11 to 20 years	187	48.6	
	From 21 to 30 years	102	26.5	
	More than 30 years	51	13.2	
Gender of son	Male	248	64.4	
	Female	137	35.6	
Total of the main sample		385	100	

Table (1) The Distribution of Sample Members According To (Guardian - Husband - Duration Of Marriage - Son's Gender - Son's Age)

Research Tools

The current research relied on two scales: the Psychological Resilience Scale (prepared by: van der Meer et al., 2018). (van der Meer et al, 2018) and the Emotional Competence Scale prepared by (Nikčević-Milković et al., 2020).

Psychometric Properties of the Two Scales

1. Internal Consistency

To calculate internal consistency, the two scales were applied to a pilot sample of (80) parents. Then, the Pearson-r correlation coefficient was calculated between the score of each item and the total score of the scale to which it belongs. The results showed that the correlation coefficients of the total score on each item of the Parental Psychological Resilience Scale were directly correlated with the total score of the scale, ranging from moderate to strong, with values ranging from (0.749) to (0). Also, each item of the Children's Emotional Competence Scale was directly correlated, ranging from moderate to strong, with values ranging from (0.77) to (0.418). All of these values were statistically significant at the (0.01) level. This indicates the internal consistency of the two scales, meaning that each scale, with its items measures the same variable or variables that are highly correlated.

2. Reliability of the Two Scales

The reliability of the two scales was calculated after applying them to (80) parents. The reliability of the final version of the scales was then confirmed using Omega. The results showed that the Omega reliability coefficients for the Parental Psychological Resilience Scale as a whole reached (0.861), which is a high score. The Omega reliability values for the two dimensions of

the Emotional Competence Scale ranged between (0.88) and (0.782), and for the scale as a whole, they reached (0.882), all of which are high scores. This indicates the reliability of the two scales and their validity for measurement on the research sample.

Study Results

Answering the First Question:

What is the Level of Psychological Resilience in Your Religion?

To answer this question, the researcher applied the Parental Psychological Resilience Scale to a sample of parents. By calculating the experimental arithmetic mean, standard deviation, hypothetical mean, and t-test value for one group (One Sample t-test). Table (2) illustrates this:

	Expressions number of dimension		Experimental Mean	Standard Deviation	"T" value
Total score for parental psychological resilience	9	22.5	23.164	6.74	1.93

Table (2) Difference Between the Experimental Mean and Hypothetical Mean for Parental Psychological Resilience in A Sample of Parents

Table (2) shows no statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the sample members on the total score for parental psychological resilience and the hypothetical mean for the total score at a significance level of (0.05), which means that the level of parental psychological resilience was average.

Answering the second question:

What is the level of emotional competence among children from their parents' perspective?

To answer this question, the researcher applied the children's emotional competence scale to the research sample. She then calculated the experimental mean, standard deviation, hypothetical mean, and t-test (Sample One). Table (3) is illustrative:

	Expressions number of scale	Hypothetical mean		Standard deviation	"T" Value
Total score on emotional	14	35	34.83	10.14	
competence				0.337-	

Table (3) Difference Between the Experimental Mean and the Hypothetical Mean on Emotional Competence Among Children

Table (3) shows that there were no statistically significant differences between the sample members' mean scores on emotional competence and the hypothetical mean at the significance level (0.05)/ This means that the level of emotional competence among the children was average.

Answering the third question:

Do you find significant differences in psychological resilience according to the variables of religion (father/mother), age, and the interaction between them?

To answer this question, the researcher used a two-way analysis of variance to determine the significance of the differences between the means of the research sample on parental psychological resilience according to the variables of parents (father/mother), age, and the interaction between them. The following tables illustrate this:

Sig.	_		Degree of freedom	Total of squares	Variables	Source of variance
0.0001	10.41	388.22	9		Parental psychological resilience	Corrected form
0.0001	1681.43	62722.74	1		Parental psychological resilience	Intercept
0.001	8.99	335.18	1		Parental psychological resilience	Parent
0.003	4.74	176.81	4		Parental psychological resilience	Age
0.321	1.18	43.86	4		Parental psychological resilience	Parent *Age
		37.30	375		Parental psychological resilience	Error
			385		Parental psychological resilience	Total
			384	17482.69	Parental psychological resilience	Corrected total

Table (4) Results of the Two-Way Analysis of Variance to Determine the Significance of the Differences in Psychological Resilience According to the Variables of Parent (Father/Mother), Age, and the Interaction Between Them

Table (4) shows that there are statistically significant differences between the average scores of the study sample on parental psychological resilience according to the variables of parent and age, as the (F) values were statistically significant at a significance level of (0.01).

Table (4) also shows that there are no statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the sample on parental psychological resilience according to the interaction between parent and age, as the (F) values were not statistically significant at a significance level of (0.05).

To know the direction of the differences between the mean scores of the parents (father/mother) in the response to the psychological resilience scale, the researcher used the "t" test for two independent samples as shown in the following table:

Scale		Parent	n					Degree of significance
	of	Father	178	21.16	6.68	5,62	383	0.0001
psychological resilience		Mother	207	24,89	6,33	_		Significant

Table (5) "T" Value and Its Statistical Significance for the Differences Between the Average Scores of the Two Groups (Father, Mother) in the Response to the Psychological Resilience Scale

Table (5) shows statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the two groups (father, mother) in the response to parental psychological resilience, in favour of the mothers' group, as the "t" value reached (5,6-), which is a statistically significant value at a significance level of (0.01).

To determine the direction of the significance of the differences according to age in the response to the scale, the "LSD" test was used for post-test pairwise comparisons, as shown in the following table:

Scale	Group (A)	Group (B)	hetween		Statistical significance
		From 30 to 39	*3.625	1.16	0.002
		From 40 to 49	*4.267	1.14	0.0001
	From 20 to 29	From 50 to 59	*6.198	1.25	0.0001
psychological resilience		From 60 to 69	*11.196	1.36	0.0001
	From 30 to 39	From 40 to 49	0.643	0.81	0.426
		From 50 to 59	*2.573	0.96	0.008
		From 60 to 69	*7.571	1.09	0.0001
	From 40 to 49	From 50 to 59	*1.93	0.93	0.039
		From 60 to 69	*6.93	1.07	0.0001
	From 60 to 96	From 50 to 59	*4.998	1.19	0.0001

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Table (6) The Results of the "LSD" Test for the Post-Test Pairwise

Comparisons of the Sample of the Study According to the Variable "Age"

* Means that the difference between the means is significant at a significance level of 0.05.

Table (6) shows the following:

There are statistically significant differences between the responses of sample members according to the age variable, in favour of the younger age groups compared to the older age groups, with regard to the Parental Psychological Resilience Scale. The value of the difference between their means was statistically significant at a significance level of (0.05). However, the results did not show significant differences between sample members from the age group (from 30 to 39) compared to the age group (from 40 to 49), where the value of the difference between their means is not statistically significant at a significance level of (0.05).

Answer the fourth question:

Is there a relationship between parental resilience and their children's emotional competence?

To answer this question, the researcher used Pearson's correlation coefficient to determine whether there was a correlation between parental psychological resilience (total score) and emotional competence (total score and dimensions) among children. The following Table (7) illustrates this relationship.

Dimension	Own emotions	Emotions of others	Total score for emotional
			competence
Total score for parental			
psychological resilience	**0.657	**0.547	**0.673

Table (7) Study of the Relationship Between Parental Psychological Resilience And Emotional Competence Among Children (Total Score And Dimensions)

(**) Significant at the (0.01) level

Table (7) shows a direct correlation between moderate and high, which is statistically significant at the (0.01) level, between the scores of the children in the research sample on the total score of the parental psychological resilience scale and the total score for emotional competence and its dimensions (own emotions - emotions of others). The correlation values ranged between (0.547) and (0.73).

Answering he fifth question:

Can a child's emotional intelligence be predicted based on their parents' level of psychological resilience?

To answer this question, the researcher simple linear regression to study the effect of parental psychological resilience (total score) on emotional competence (total score). Table (8) is illustrative:

										_
Predictor	Predicting	Multivaria	Multivaria	Mod	"F" and its	Value	В	Beta	"T"	
Variable	Variable	te "R"	te	el	significan	of the			and i	ts
			"R2"	"R2"	ce				significa	n
						consta			ce	
						nt				
Emotional	Parental									
competen	psychologic	0.673	0.453	0.452	317.53	8.315	1.01	0.67	*17.82	
ce	al resilience						2	3		
	Emotional									
	competence									

Table (8) Results of Simple Regression Analysis to Predict Emotional Competence Through
Psychological Resilience

(**) Significant at the level (0.01)

Table (8) shows the following:

The results of the simple regression analysis showed that parental resilience contributes a statistically significant positive correlation to predicting emotional competence. The "F" value for the prediction was (317.53), which is statistically significant at a significance level of (0.01). This indicates that the significance of the model. The coefficient of determination was (0.453), indicating that (45.3%) of the variance in emotional competence can be explained based on the variance in parental resilience.

The t-test also indicates that the estimated regression coefficients were statistically significant at a significance level of (0.01) for parental resilience. Therefore, the regression relationship can be formulated as follows:

Total score for emotional competence = $8.315 + 1.012 \times \text{parental resilience}$

This relationship means that with a one-point increase in parental resilience, children's emotional competence increases by an amount (1.012) degrees when all other variables are constant.

Discussion

The study results indicate that parents enjoy an average level of psychological resilience. This level indicates a good degree of ability to adapt to life's pressures and confront changing situations with flexible and open-minded methods. This degree can also be considered an indicator of a balance between their skills in regulating emotions and their susceptibility to various psychological and social pressures. It should be noted that this average level may reflect the influence of several factors related to the family and social environment, such as the burden of parental responsibilities, parenting requirements, and a lack of training in coping strategies, in addition to the surrounding cultural frameworks that may contribute to shaping parental behaviour and response patterns. This result is consistent with the study by Brassell et al. (2016), which showed that the parents in the sample enjoyed an average level of general psychological resilience and flexibility in their role as parents.

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On the other hand, the results revealed an average level of emotional competence among children. This average level is indicative of the availability of basic skills in the emotional aspect, except for it may not be complete or sufficiently advanced, which may affect the quality of their social interactions and their ability to manage emotional situations effectively. This level is likely related to several factors, including the nature of the family environment and parenting styles, the extent of emotional support provided by parents, and the impact of the school and social experiences children experience at different stages of their development.

In terms of differences, the study found significant differences in parental psychological resilience in favour of mothers and the younger age group of parents. The researcher attributes this to the daily and dynamic nature of emotional interaction between mothers and their children, as mothers often play a major role in direct care and upbringing, which gives them greater flexibility in dealing with stressful situations and challenges associated with raising children. Mothers may also be more expressive of their feelings and emotionally interact with their children, which enhances the development of flexible responses in different family contexts. This is consistent with the results of the study (Mohamad, & Abd-Alkader, 2018), and also consistent with the study (Pan et al., 2024), which concluded that psychological resilience among mothers had a stronger and clearer effect in reducing children's behavioural problems compared to fathers, indicating that mothers possess higher levels of psychological resilience.

Regarding the age variable, the superiority of the younger age group in the level of psychological resilience may be due to the characteristics of the age group itself and their ability to sustain flexible strategies in facing challenges. Younger groups may also be more interested in following up on psychological and family awareness and training resources, such as social media or counselling programs, which contribute to raising their level of psychological resilience.

The results also revealed a positive, direct relationship between parental psychological resilience and children's emotional competence. The researcher attributes this relationship to several reasons, including that psychologically resilient parents serve as behavioural models and role models for their children. As indicated by Mortazavizadeh et al. (2022), parents' ability to control their emotions and deal with difficult situations with flexibility and balance provides a practical model through which children learn how to manage and regulate their emotions, which contributes to enhancing their emotional competence. Furthermore, parents' psychological resilience and their reliance on supportive, non-authoritarian parenting methods contribute to shaping a family environment characterized by emotional security. This reduces the intensity of conflicts and disputes, and family relationships are characterized by understanding and support. The continued use of positive communication patterns, such as active listening, understanding feelings, and positive guidance, is an essential element in building emotional confidence in children and enhancing their ability to express their feelings freely. This result is consistent with several previous studies, such as the study of Sharma & Shreya (2024) and Muntaha et al. (2024), which investigated the impact of flexible supportive parenting methods on children's emotional competence.

Finally, the current study concluded that parental psychological resilience can predict children's emotional competence. The researcher believes that this result can be explained by the "social modelling" theory, which asserts that children acquire emotional and social behaviours through observing and interacting with role models in their lives, primarily parents. Therefore, a high level of psychological resilience in parents constitutes a positive model that enhances children's emotional competence. Furthermore, parental psychological resilience represents a protective

factor that protects children from exposure to emotional and affective disorders, especially in stressful environments. This resilience helps parents contain stress and provide appropriate psychological support to their children, which enhances their emotional maturity and emotional competence. This result is consistent with the study of Morris et al. (2017, which showed that safe, flexible, and supportive family relationships are among the key factors that contribute to emotional maturity and competence. It contributes to enabling children to express and regulate their emotions effectively.

Limitations and Future Directions

Although the study's findings highlight the positive relationship between parental resilience and children's emotional competence, it is not without some limitations that should be taken into account when interpreting or generalizing the results. The study relied on a quantitative approach using self-administered questionnaires, which may not necessarily reflect the psychological and contextual complexities of the relationship under study. Additionally, the data were limited to parent reports only, without involving the children themselves or using direct instruments to measure emotional competence, which may affect the accuracy and depth of the results. Based on the above, several future research directions are proposed, including the use of qualitative or mixed methods that contribute to a deeper understanding of the nature of the relationship between the two variables, in addition to incorporating assessments from children or external sources such as teachers or nurses to provide a more comprehensive perspective. It is also recommended to explore mediating or moderating variables that may play a role in explaining this relationship, such as family communication patterns or levels of life stress. This is in addition to developing guidance programs aimed at enhancing psychological resilience in parents and experimentally measuring its impact on children's emotional competence.

Summary

The current study sought to explore the relationship between parental psychological resilience and children's emotional competence. The results revealed a statistically significant positive correlation between parents' psychological resilience and children's emotional competence. It was shown that a high level of psychological resilience in parents contributes to enhancing children's ability to express their feelings, regulate their emotions, and engage in positive social interactions. The results also demonstrated the ability of parental psychological resilience to predict children's levels of emotional competence, underscoring the importance of the family's role in shaping children's emotional development. These findings support theoretical approaches that emphasize the influence of the family context and a supportive, flexible climate on the development of children's psychological and social skills. Based on the findings of this research, there is a need to develop guidance and educational programs targeting parents, focusing on developing and enhancing psychological resilience skills, given their positive impact on the psychological and emotional health of the family as a whole.

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