

Adolescents' perceptions of autonomy-supportive parents and social-emotional health: Serial multiple mediation of positive stress and mental toughness

Journal of Psychologists and
Counsellors in Schools
1–16

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DOI: 10.1177/20556365241295297

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Abstract

Adolescence may bring some developmental challenges that affect social-emotional health. However, it is also possible to turn challenges into opportunities. Parental autonomy support, psychological stress, and mental toughness can contribute to adolescents having a healthy period. This study examined the mediating role of positive stress and mental toughness in the relationship between parental autonomy support and social-emotional health. The study included 441 (female 56.46%, male 43.54%) adolescents in Turkey enrolled in a high school. Self-report scales were used in this cross-sectional study. The results showed that positive stress and mental toughness were serial mediators of the relationship between adolescents' perceptions of parental autonomy support and social-emotional health outcomes (indirect effect = 0.05 [0.03, 0.08]). These results extend the implications of self-determination and positive psychology theories. It guides parents, educators, and school counselors in strengthening adolescents' social-emotional health. Adolescents' socio-emotional health can be enhanced through workshops and counseling services that offer parental autonomy support, positive management of stress, and mental toughness.

Keywords

Adolescence, autonomy, parenting, resilience, social-emotional health

Introduction

Adolescence is a critical period in the process of individuals discovering themselves and the world. While this period may bring changes that may destabilize adolescents' mental health (Giang et al., 2023), it also offers important opportunities to develop a healthy identity and autonomy (Curtis, 1992). The autonomy support provided by parents in this process plays a vital role in reinforcing

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