

Parental Psychological Control, Resilience and Employment Stress Among Chinese University Pharmacy Students as Basis for School-based Group Counseling Program

Ali Tao^{1,2}, Xuehua Feng^{1,2}, Elna R. Lopez^{1,*}

¹ College of Arts and Sciences, Lyceum of the Philippines University, Batangas City, PH

² College of Pharmacy, Anhui Xinhua University, Hefei City, An Hui Province, CO 230088, CN

* Corresponding author: Elna R. Lopez (Email: 1982343785@qq.com)

Abstract: In this study, 985 Chinese college students aged 16-21 years from the school of Pharmacy in Anhui Xinhua University, were investigated using a standardized questionnaire method. An intervention program to relieve the employment pressure of college students can improve it from the perspective of individual, parents and school. The results showed that, the employment stress of the college students was generally moderate, with significant differences in age. Respondents reported a low level of parental psychological control with significant differences in gender and grade. Respondents had an moderate level of resilience with significant differences in their monthly household income. There was a correlation between employment pressure and psychological resilience and parents' psychological control. There was no correlation between psychological control and psychological resilience.

Keywords: Employment stress, Parental psychological control, Resilience, Chinese College students.

1. Introduction

With the continuous development of the current society and the increasingly fierce competition, the society is also in the transition period, and people are facing unprecedented opportunities and challenges. As a special group, college students are in an important stage of life, and they are facing both the pressure of study and the employment stress. Employment stress refers to the feeling of oppression produced when individuals consider employment problems, prepare for obtaining a career, and face threatening and challenging stimuli in the process of seeking a career. It is a phenomenon of psychological tension caused by the interaction between individual subjective factors and the employment situation in the process of employment [1]. It can also be understood that employment stress is a kind of psychological pressure on employment after cognitive evaluation, stimulated by internal and external environment [2]. With the development of the economy and the further improvement of the education system, the number of Chinese college students was increasing year by year[3-5].

Parents psychological control is a common way of negative parenting, the parents psychological control method is different from other parenting point is that in the name of love to control the behavior of children, this parenting will cause children in the way in the process of growth, not easy to form autonomy and healthy personality, and the negative effects of the control will not disappear with the growth of age, is a long influence, will continue to early adulthood. In family environment education, parents' psychological control, as a sinister parenting mode, is relatively hidden and difficult for individuals to detect. It is usually associated with negative results, affecting the normal development of individual body and mind, and is prone to a series of maladaptive problems, such as anxiety, worry and other mental health problems[6-8].

Parents' psychological control and psychological resilience are two factors of negative correlation and positive correlation. It is particularly important to explore the effect of parents' psychological control and psychological resilience, and to seek a balance between them. Therefore, this study intends to explore the mechanism of internal influence between parental psychological control, psychological resilience and employment stress of college students. To explore the modulation of different levels of resilience between parental psychological control and stress. Deepening the study of the specific action mechanism between parents' psychological control and stress also makes a contribution to the solution of the mental health problems of Chinese college students. As such, the employment stress of college students is a problem worthy of attention, especially in the current complex employment environment, and for this reason, the researcher was motivated to study also this variable for the students while in their college level are already affected and so the exploration of the influence mechanism of employment stress became more important to her as university professor.

As such, with all the perspectives presented, the researcher considered that results of this study as very important to university administrators for this is an urgent task faced by China's higher education to strengthen the education and cultivation of college students' psychological quality, and in committing themselves strengthening the self-confidence of college students and also their psychological resilience that can help them reduce their employment pressure. Likewise, findings can promote college students physical and mental health, and reduce the occurrence of depressive symptoms.

2. Participants and Measures

2.1. Participants

The participants in this study were 985 students with different demographic characteristics and professional

backgrounds from the pharmacy college of Anhui Xinhua University, in Anhui province of China. The College of Pharmacy has four majors, including Pharmacy, Pharmaceutical Engineering, Pharmaceutical Preparation, and Health Service and Management programs. There were approximately 1500 students in the pharmacy college, but 985 students were selected to participate. The participants were drawn from freshmen to seniors. Respondents for this study were selected through purposive sampling of pharmacy students who were currently studying at the school. The basic situation of the students participating in the questionnaire is shown in Table 1. This experiment was approved by the LPU-B Research Ethics Review Committee, and all 985 students participated voluntarily and signed the informed consent.

Table 1. Respondent's Demographic Profile(n=985)

Item	f	%
Sex		
Male	466	47.3
Female	519	52.7
Age		
16 – 17 years old	51	5.2
18 – 20 years old	482	48.9
Over 21 years old	452	45.9
Major		
Pharmacy	589	59.8
Pharmaceutical Engineering	204	20.7
Pharmaceutical Preparation	67	6.8
Health Services and Management	125	12.7
Grade Level		
1st	96	9.7
2nd	353	35.8
3rd	363	36.9
4th	173	17.6
Parent's Occupation		
Merchant	142	14.4
Worker	397	40.3
Civil Servant	110	11.2
Teacher	49	5.0
Others	287	29.1
Monthly family Income		
5000 – 10000	381	38.7
10000 – 30000	462	46.9
40000 – 60000	142	14.4

Table 1 shows the summary distribution of participants. As can be seen from Table 1, among the students participating in the questionnaire, there are more females than males, the largest number of college students aged 18-20 years, the most distributed grade is the third grade, the most number of parent's occupation is workers, and most distributed monthly income of family is 10000-30000 CNY.

2.2. Measures

2.2.1. Parental Psychological Control Scale

In this study, the scale of parental psychological control was compiled by Wang et al., which is widely used in China, proving that the reliability and validity of the questionnaire is good. This scale is the parental mental control subscale of the parental control scale with 18 items of Likert level 5, "1" means "completely inconsistent" and "5" means "complete consistent". The scale includes three dimensions of guilt, withdrawal of love and arbitrary use of rights.

2.2.2. The Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale(CD-RISC)

This scale is a resilience assessment method developed by

Katherine M. Connor and Jonathan R.T. Davidson. Based on Connor and Davidson's operational definition of resilience, the ability to "thrive in adversity". Since its development in 2003, the CD-RISC has been tested in different settings and modified to different versions. The CD-RISC was created to improve existing resilience measures (e. g., cold tolerance or perceived stress). Existing elastic scales are considered inadequate because of their lack of generalizability. In view of this, the CD-RISC was tested using multiple populations to increase the generalizability of the metric. These groups included a community sample, primary care outpatient, general psychiatric outpatient, one of GAD clinical trial and two PTSD clinical trials. The authors take inspiration for the content of this scale from work by previous investigators, most notably S.C.Kobasa and M.Rutter. The CD-RISC consists of 25 items evaluated using the Likert 5-point scale ranging from 1-5: completely incorrect (1), rarely correct (2), sometimes correct (3), often correct (4), almost all times (5). These scoring results are all numbers between 0 and 100, with higher scores indicating higher resilience. The Chinese version of the psychological resilience scale was used in this study. The scale was revised by Xiao Nan and Zhang Jianxin, with a total of 25 items and 5 points. The questionnaire included three factors: tenacity, strength and optimism. The higher the score, the higher the level of psychological resilience.

2.2.3. Employment Stress Scale of College Students

The employment pressure scale of college students compiled by Chen Jun is adopted. The scale consists of 17 items, divided into four dimensions: career expectations, job-hunting experience, psychological factors and physical factors. Each item used a Likert 5 grade score, i. e. 1= Completely inconsistent, 2= compare not fit, 3= uncertain, 4= basically fit and 5=Fully fit. The total scale score was 85, and the higher the subject scored on the questionnaire, the greater the employment pressure they felt.

2.3. Data Analysis

The data is analyzed using specialized statistical tools. The data were transformed by standard classification, descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, pathway analysis, etc. The main statistical methods of this study are descriptive statistics, analysis of variance, correlation analysis and adjustment analysis. Apply descriptive statistics to analyze the general characteristics of college students; apply variance analysis and t test to compare the differences of employment stress in different situations; apply the multiple stratified regression analysis to explore the influence of parents' psychological control and psychological resilience on employment stress, and proposed the theoretical model of parents' psychological control and psychological resilience on employment stress.

3. Results

3.1. Analysis of Scores of Each item in Parental Psychological Control Scale

Table 2 shows the results of differences on the respondent's parent's psychological control when compared according to profile. The results showed significant differences of parental psychological control in different gender and different grade($P < 0.05$), with no significant differences in the different age, major, parent's occupation and the monthly family income ($P > 0.05$). There were no significant differences in parental psychological control regarding age, parent's

occupation, and monthly family income. With the development of educational philosophy, parents will try to let their children feel their love, not to let them feel the gap.

Table 2. Differences on the Respondent's Parent's Psychological Control when Compared According to Profile (n = 985)

	Parent's Psychological Control		
	t/F	p-value	Interpretation
Sex	2.696	.007	Significant
Age	2.481	.084	Not Significant
Grade Level	3.599	.013	Significant
Major	.590	.622	Not Significant
Parent's Occupation	1.007	.403	Significant
Monthly Family Income	.643	.526	Not Significant

Difference is significant at 0.05 alpha level

3.2. CD-RISC of Each Item Score Analysis

Table 3 shows the results of differences on the respondent's resilience when compared according to profile. The results showed significant differences of resilience in different monthly family income ($P < 0.05$), with no significant differences in the different gender, age, grade level, major and parent's occupation ($P > 0.05$).

Table 3. Differences on the Respondent's Resilience when Compared According to Profile (n=985)

	t/F	p-value	Interpretation
Sex	-1.367	.172	Not Significant
Age	.852	.427	Not Significant
Grade Level	1.009	.388	Not Significant
Major	.394	.757	Not Significant
Parent's Occupation	1.694	.149	Not Significant
Monthly Family Income	3.603	.028	Significant

Difference is significant at 0.05 alpha level

3.3. Analysis of the scores of Employment Stress Scale of College Students

Table 4 shows the results of differences on the respondent's employment stress when compared according to profile. The results indicated that the employment pressure of different ages ($P < 0.05$), indicating that age is the factor affecting the employment pressure of college students. This study found no significant difference in the employment pressure of college students among different genders ($P >$

0.05), grade, major, parental occupation and monthly family income ($P > 0.05$), indicating that none of them were factors affecting the employment pressure of college students.

Table 4. Differences on the Respondent's Employment Stress when Compared According to Profile (n=985)

	t/F	p-value	Interpretation
Sex	1.394	0.164	Not Significant
Age	4.878	0.008	Significant
Grade Level	4.556	0.004	Significant
Major	1.928	0.054	Not Significant
Residence	0.667	0.505	Not Significant

Difference is significant at 0.05 alpha level

3.4. Correlation analysis of Employment Stress, Parental Psych. Control and Resilience

Table 5 presents the relationship of the respondent's personality when compared according to profile. From the correlation table, there was a significant correlation between both parental psychological control and resilience and employment stress. The psychological resilience measured in this study had a significant negative association with employment stress, with a correlation coefficient of -0.394. There was a significant positive correlation between parental psychological control and employment stress, with a correlation coefficient of 0.169. The correlation between parental psychological control and psychological resilience investigated in this study was not significant.

4. Discussion

4.1. Relationship between Employment Stress and Psychological Resilience

There was a negative correlation between employment stress and psychological resilience in the study, which is consistent with previous studies [9-10]. The greater the employment pressure, the lower the level of psychological resilience. The less the employment pressure, the higher the level of psychological resilience. The size of employment pressure will affect the level of psychological elasticity. When individuals feel employment pressure, it will change the external environmental factors (including risk factors

and protective factors). At the same time, under the action of internal elasticity factors, individuals will gain psychological elasticity. Employment pressure is a risk factor, when the employment pressure is high, the risk factor increases, while the internal elasticity factor is fixed, so the individual psychological elasticity level will decrease; when the employment pressure is small, the risk factor and protective factor can be balanced, while the internal elasticity factor is fixed, so the psychological elasticity level will remain unchanged or improve. This shows why there is a weak negative correlation between the two.

Table 5. Correlation Matrix of the Variables of the Study

	Employment Stress			Parental Psychological Control			Resilience		
	r	p-value	Int.	r	p-value	Int.	r	p-value	Int.
Employment Stress	-	-	-	.169	.000	S	-.394	.000	S
Parental Psych. Control	.169	.000	S	-	-	-	-.047	.137	NS
Resilience	-.394	.000	S	-.047	.137	NS	-	-	-

4.2. Relationship between Employment Stress and Parental Psychological Control

This study demonstrated a positive correlation between employment stress and parental psychological control. On the one hand, higher employment pressure may lead individuals to feel anxious, nervous and stressed. When individuals are faced with employment pressure, they need to make decisions that are difficult to choose, while also coping with expectations and stress from society and family, which may increase their sense of anxiety and inner stress. If parents exert too much psychological control over their children, such as forcing the choice of specific occupations and limiting their children's freedom to make decisions, it will further increase individual employment pressure. On the other hand, higher parental psychological control may aggravate individual employment stress. Parents' psychological control may be manifested by excessive interference in their children's employment choices and mandatory guidance on their children's career decisions. This excessive control may make individuals feel lack of autonomy and autonomy, increasing their employment pressure and sense of inner insecurity. Individuals may feel bound and unable to pursue their real interests and goals, leading to adverse psychological reactions. Therefore, a reasonable family environment and parental education methods have an important impact on the individual's employment pressure and mental health, and encouraging and supporting the individual's independent development will help to reduce the employment pressure.

4.3. Relationship between Employment Stress and Parental Psychological Control

Although both parental mental control and resilience are associated to individual mental health and resilience, the current study did not find a significant correlation between them. This may be because resilience is a complex concept influenced by multiple factors, including the individual's own traits and experiences, of which parental psychological control is only one aspect. In addition, parental psychological control and resilience may be disturbed by other factors. For example, the individual's social support, the individual's attitudes and values, and other family environment factors may all have an impact on the correlation between these two variables. It should be noted that while the present findings did not show a significant correlation between parental mental control and resilience, parental parenting style remains critical for individual mental health. Parent parenting practices may have some impact on individual resilience, but specific associations remains to be further investigated.

5. Conclusion

This study showed Most of the respondents are female ranging from 18 -20 years of age, currently pursuing Pharmacy in their Second and Third year levels and most parents are working with monthly income of 10,000 to 20,000 RMB. Respondents have low level of parental psychological control and moderate resilience and stress which imply that they may be more likely to develop anxiety and depression, as they may not have the support they need to deal with their employment stress. Sex and grade level of the respondents

were found to have significant difference in terms of parental psychological control which means that these two profile have the biggest impact on how much parental psychological control a child experiences. Only family monthly income significantly differ to respondents resilience while age to employment stress which suggest that students may be more likely to engage in risky behaviors, such as substance abuse and criminal activity and that women and men may experience employment stress differently. The results showed that there is a correlation between employment stress and psychological resilience which means that students who experience higher levels of employment stress are also more likely to have lower levels of resilience.

Acknowledgment

We thank Dr. Lopez, Dr. Landicho, Dr. Mamara Bananlan. This work was supported in part by a grant from Anhui Provincial Education Department quality engineering project (2022sx061,2011rcpys01) and Anhui Provincial University Talents Top funding project (gxbjZD2021089).

References

- [1] Sun Yanling. Depression on depression among College Students. *Disease surveillance and control*, 2017,04:291-292.
- [2] Hao Hui. Contemporary college students employment problem and its countermeasures. *Small and medium-sized enterprise management and technology*, 2018,01:117-118.
- [3] Zhang Dandan, Liu Huan, Zhang Ming, et al. Analysis of the employment stress status and psychosocial influencing factors of medical school graduates. *Labor security world*, 2019,26:14-16.
- [4] Li Jie, Zhang Lejun, Wen Zhaoyou, et al. Effect of parental psychological control on social anxiety in migrant children: Chain-wise mediation of self-esteem and the inability to tolerate uncertainty. *The Chinese Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 2021,29 (1), 139-143.
- [5] Sun Ling, Li Yulan, Ma Xuexiang, et al. Effect of parental psychological control on adolescent depression: a multiple mediator model. *Special Education in China*, 2019,26 (3):76-82.
- [6] Ulrike Lux, Sabine Walper. A systemic perspective on children's emotional insecurity in relation to father: links to parenting, interparental conflict and children's social well-being. *Attachment & Human Development* 2019,21(5):467-484.
- [7] Westwood, M., Hapworth, R. The impact of academic stress on graduate employability. *Journal of Education and Work*, 2019,32(2):133-148.
- [8] Xu Xinpei, Deng Ciping, Liu Ming. Relationship between parents' academic participation and negative emotions of high school students: the mediating role of parent-child relationship and the regulation of parents' psychological control. *Psychological science*, 2020,43 (6):1341-1347.
- [9] Wu, Y., Yu, W., Lu, G. Psychological resilience and positive coping styles among Chinese undergraduate students: a cross-sectional study. *BMC psychology*, 2020,8(1):1-11.
- [10] Yu Dandan. An empirical study on employment stress coping and emotional management of college students from the perspective of positive psychology. *Employment of Chinese college students*, 2017,(7), 58-64.