

Paternal Negative Parenting and Ill-Being in Adolescence: Examining the Moderating Role of Resilience

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Abstract

Objectives: This study explores the associations between paternal negative parenting—specifically rejection, control/overprotection, and anxious rearing—and adolescent ill-being. Additionally, it examines whether resilience moderates these relationships, potentially buffering the negative effects of paternal negative parenting on adolescent well-being.

Methods: A cross-sectional study was conducted with 331 adolescents (ages 12-16) from junior and senior high schools in Attica, Greece. Participants completed the Berne Questionnaire of Subjective Well-Being/Youth Form (BSW/Y), the Egná Minnen Beträffande Uppfostran (EMBU-C) questionnaire, and the Resilience Scale. Correlation analyses, multiple regression models, and moderation analyses were employed to examine the associations between paternal negative parenting, resilience, and adolescent ill-being.

Results: Results showed that paternal rejection, though the least reported, was the strongest predictor of adolescent ill-being. Resilience was negatively associated with paternal rejection and significantly predicted well-being outcomes. A moderation analysis revealed that resilience buffered the negative association between paternal control/overprotection and adolescent ill-being, with lower resilience amplifying the adverse effects. Younger adolescents perceived their fathers as more controlling and overprotective, while girls reported higher ill-being than boys.

Implications: These findings highlight the pivotal role of resilience in mitigating the adverse effects of paternal negative parenting. Intervention efforts should prioritize the reduction of paternal rejection and control/overprotection, while simultaneously fostering resilience in adolescents. Integrating resilience-building components and encouraging positive paternal involvement may enhance psychosocial outcomes and promote adaptive developmental trajectories.

Keywords: Fathers; negative parenting; adolescence; ill-being; resilience.

Introduction

Adolescence is a developmental stage characterized by increased psychological sensitivity and identity exploration, with parental influences playing a pivotal role in shaping emotional and behavioural outcomes (Feldman, 2017). While maternal parenting has received substantial attention in the literature, the distinct role of paternal parenting during adolescence remains comparatively underexplored (Cabrera et al., 2018). The present study seeks to address this gap by investigating the associations between perceived paternal parenting behaviours—specifically negative practices such as rejection, anxious rearing and control/overprotection—and adolescent well-being, with a particular focus on the moderating role of resilience as a potential buffer against the negative effects of such parenting.

Parenting has traditionally been conceptualized through typologies such as Baumrind's (1991) authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive styles based on the dimensions of warmth and control. Maccoby and Martin (1983) later introduced demandingness (instead of control) and responsiveness (instead of warmth) leading to the inclusion of indulgent (low demandingness/high responsiveness) and neglectful (low on both) parenting (Braza et al., 2015). Research has suggested additional cultural-specific styles, such as the "strict type" in Greece, which combines characteristics of both authoritarian and authoritative parenting, where parents punish their children but also believe they are entitled to explanations for the punishment (Antonopoulou & Tsitsas, 2011).

Research consistently shows that positive parenting, characterized by responsiveness and appropriate demands, promotes adolescent well-being, while demanding parenting can lead to internalizing and externalizing problems (Filus et al., 2019; Seay et al., 2014; Zupančič & Kavčič, 2011). Negative parenting practices, such as overprotection, excessive control, rejection, and anxious rearing are linked to outcomes like anxiety, social anxiety, and victimization for children and adolescents (Georgiou, 2008; Kuppens & Ceulmens, 2019). Conversely, parental warmth fosters positive traits like self-competence, empathy, and social skills (Lianos, 2015; Yeung et al., 2016). A recent meta-analysis highlights the importance of parenting style, linking authoritative or permissive parenting to higher happiness and self-esteem, while authoritarian-permissive combinations predict lower self-esteem in adolescents (Szkody et al., 2021). Harsh, authoritarian, and neglectful parenting are linked to increased externalizing problems (Pinquart, 2017), and studies agree that authoritarian or permissive parenting correlates with adolescent difficulties (Braza et al., 2015).

Paternal Parenting

Historically, parenting research has predominantly focused on mothers, yet paternal involvement is increasingly recognized as essential for adolescent development (Smetana, 2017). While meta-analyses suggest no universal maternal or paternal style (McLeod et al., 2007; van der Bruggen et al., 2008), studies consistently highlight behavioural differences. Mothers are generally described as more emotionally warm and supportive, whereas fathers are more likely to promote autonomy, engage in physical play, and adopt risk-taking behaviours during interactions (Favez & Frascarolo, 2020; Mastrotheodoros et al., 2019; Möller et al., 2016). Evidence suggests that fathers' behaviours, particularly in the context of autonomy support and challenging interactions, can significantly influence child outcomes. Meta-analyses found that paternal challenging behaviours had a stronger impact on infant anxiety than maternal behaviours (Bögels & Perotti, 2011; Möller et al., 2016). Nonetheless, many studies continue to aggregate maternal and paternal behaviours or focus solely on mothers, limiting insights into father-specific effects (Filus et al., 2019).

Studies examining each parent's role have yielded inconsistent results. Some research links only maternal parenting to developmental outcomes (de Maat et al., 2021; Slicker et al., 2005), while others report significant associations with paternal behaviours, particularly during adolescence (Bhattacharyya & Pradhan, 2015; Majdandžić et al., 2016; Möller et al., 2016). For example, Lampropoulou (2018) found that maternal communication enhanced adolescents' well-being, whereas paternal communication was more strongly associated with reduced ill-being. Importantly, discrepancies in findings may stem from the developmental stage studied, with fewer studies focusing on late adolescence.

Despite growing interest in positive paternal involvement, negative paternal behaviours remain underexplored. Yet, evidence shows that such behaviours can be particularly harmful. Paternal rejection has been linked to poor adjustment across cultures, with hostility and lack of acceptance predicting adolescent maladjustment and lower resilience (Khaleque & Rohner, 2012; Ogelman, 2015; Putnick et al., 2018). A large-scale meta-analysis found that paternal acceptance had a stronger association with psychological adjustment in daughters than maternal acceptance (Ali et al., 2015). Moreover, paternal rejection has been associated with depression, aggression (i.e.,

particularly in boys), maladjustment, and even substance use (McKenzie & Casselman, 2017; Miranda et al., 2016). Paternal control and overprotection have also been linked to social anxiety and general anxiety across cultures (Arslan et al., 2023; Van Petegem et al., 2022). In Greece, paternal stress was found to predict internalizing problems in adolescents (Bakoula et al., 2009), while authoritarian paternal behaviours were associated with lower empathy, self-esteem, and social competence (Antonopoulou et al., 2011; Lianos, 2015).

These findings underscore the importance of examining the distinct role of fathers in adolescent development, particularly the impact of negative paternal behaviours, and suggest the need to explore potential moderating factors that could buffer adolescents against their effects.

Resilience as a Moderator

A developmental psychopathology framework suggests that maladaptive outcomes often emerge from the interplay between individual vulnerabilities and contextual stressors (Toth & Cicchetti, 2013). Within this perspective, parenting is understood as a relational process that interacts with individual characteristics, such as resilience, to shape developmental trajectories.

Traditionally conceptualized as an internal trait, resilience is increasingly recognized as a dynamic and context-dependent process. Ungar's (2012) social-ecological model broadens this view by emphasizing the reciprocal influence of personal strengths and external resources, such as supportive relationships, institutional structures, and culturally relevant protective factors. This integrative approach describes resilience as an interactive construct—making it a particularly relevant moderator in understanding how adolescents adapt to adverse parenting experiences.

Assuming that negative parenting, such as rejection, anxious rearing, and control/overprotection, constitutes an adversity, resilience could act as a protective factor against the consequences of negative parenting. Despite its significance, few studies have specifically examined resilience as a protective moderator in the context of negative paternal parenting. Foundational longitudinal studies identified resilient profiles among children/adolescents facing adversities such as parental psychopathology or family discord (Werner, 1993; Werner & Smith, 1982). Swanson et al. (2011) reported that ego resilience mediated the associations between parenting style and adolescent adjustment in Mexican American youth. However, much of the existing literature either focuses on resilience as an outcome of parenting or examines its mediating role, often in relation to positive parenting or constructs such as self-compassion (Camden & Brown, 2017; Epli et al., 2023).

Although resilience is frequently linked to adaptive outcomes in the context of positive parenting (Kritzas & Grobler, 2005), its role in buffering the effects of negative paternal behaviours remain underexplored. This study aims to address that gap by examining how resilience may moderate the relationship between negative parenting and adolescent psychological well-being. A deeper understanding of resilience in this context could inform more nuanced intervention strategies. Supporting adolescents not only through individual coping skill development, but also through contextual resilience-building—such as fostering supportive father-child relationships and strengthening institutional supports—could enhance their capacity to adapt in the face of adversity.

The Current Study

Building upon prior research, the present study aims to examine the associations between adolescents' perceptions of paternal parenting behaviors and their reported ill-being, with particular attention to the moderating role of resilience. While maternal parenting has been extensively studied, the paternal role (i.e., especially during adolescence, a critical developmental period characterized by evolving relational dynamics and growing autonomy) remains relatively underexplored (Filus et al., 2019; Putnick et al., 2018). Furthermore, the well-documented negative effects of maladaptive parenting practices on adolescent well-being underscore the importance of identifying both underlying mechanisms and protective factors that may buffer against such outcomes. Gaining insight into these dynamics is essential for informing targeted interventions across family, school, and community contexts.

The present study seeks to address these gaps by examining the relationship between negative paternal parenting—specifically rejection, anxious rearing, and control/overprotection—and adolescent ill-being. A central aim is to explore whether resilience moderates this relationship, providing a better understanding of how adolescents may adapt in the context of adverse parenting. The study also investigates potential demographic differences in perceptions of paternal parenting and adolescent well-being. Findings are expected to offer implications for developing context-sensitive interventions that promote protective relational dynamics during adolescence.

Based on the literature review, the following hypotheses were made: (1) paternal rejection, anxious rearing and control/overprotection will be significantly associated with adolescent ill-being; (2) resilience will moderate the relationship between paternal negative parenting and adolescent ill-being, with higher resilience reducing ill-being; and (3) differences in adolescent perceptions will emerge based on gender and age.

The current study examined seeking and receiving social support in a sample of youth from the southern United States. Given the relative lack of knowledge on the ways that social support seeking and receiving can interact, especially among youth, more research on the relationship between these phenomena is warranted. To help understand the ways that these four groups—Interconnected, Isolated, Rebuffed, and Tended—function in the broader social ecology and can contribute to resilience, the associations of these profiles with other protective factors and indicators of current functioning are needed. The Resilience Portfolio Model (Grych et al., 2015; Hamby et al., 2018) classifies psychosocial strengths into three domains: regulatory (managing emotions and behaviors), meaning making (connecting with something larger than oneself), and interpersonal (relationships with the broader social ecology). The Resilience Portfolio Model (Grych et al., 2015; Hamby et al., 2018) also points to the need to measure a range of possible outcomes, including psychological, physical, and spiritual well-being.

Method

Sample Characteristics and Data Collection

A convenience sample of 331 adolescents (aged 12-16) attending junior high school ($n = 180$, 54.4%) and senior high school ($n = 151$, 45.6%) in Attica, Greece, was recruited. Of the participants, 222 (67.1%) were girls, 104 (31.4%) were boys, and 5 (1.5%) answered “I prefer to self-describe”. Most of the fathers ($n = 160$, 48.3%) had higher education, 122 (36.9%) fathers finished senior high school, and 47 (14.2%) father finished junior high school. Most of the parents were married ($n = 293$, 88.5%), and 31 (9.4%) were divorced/separated, while the majority had Greek origin ($n = 313$, 94.6%).

Data were collected in class via self-report questionnaires. Approval of the research was granted by the author’s Institutional Research Ethics Committee and the participant schools were informed about the goal of the research (Ref No 520α/28/03/2024). Parents gave written informed consent for their children’s participation, and all participants gave oral consent in order to participate in the study. Information about the aims and process of the study was provided on the first page of the questionnaire, and the participants were informed that their participation was voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw at any time.

Measures

For the purpose of the study the following questionnaires were used:

Berne Questionnaire of Subjective Well-Being/Youth Form (BSW/Y). The BSW/Y (Grob et al., 1991) consists of 39 items [5-point Likert scale rating from 1 (never/strongly disagree) to 5 (very often/strongly agree)] producing six subscales and two higher order factors. The subscales are: Positive attitude towards life (e.g., “My life is on track”; $\alpha = .85$); Self-esteem (e.g., “I have a positive attitude towards myself”; $\alpha = .74$); Joy in life (e.g., “During the last weeks I felt completely happy”; $\alpha = .84$); (Lack of) Depressive mood (e.g., “I find my life uninteresting”; $\alpha = .87$); Problems (e.g., “During the last weeks how often were you worried because of your school”; $\alpha = .77$); and Somatic complaints (e.g., “During the last weeks you felt unusually tired”; $\alpha = .89$). The first four positive subscales are included in a higher order factor called Satisfaction ($\alpha = .92$), and the two negative subscales are included in a higher order factor called Ill-being ($\alpha = .88$). For the purposes of this study, only the two higher-order factors were used to ensure parsimony and theoretical clarity. These constructs have demonstrated good internal consistency in previous research using the same instrument in the Greek context (Lampropoulou, 2018), and in this study as well. Given the sample size and the aim of examining broader patterns in adolescent well-being, the more robust and interpretable higher-order dimensions were prioritized.

Egna Minnen Beträffande Uppfostran (EMBU-C; Memories from my upbringing). The 40-item EMBU-C questionnaire (for ages 7-16), is a modified version of the EMBU (Castro et al., 1997; Muris et al., 2003). Participants were asked to answer for their fathers’ behaviour (4-point Likert scale: 1= No, never; 2=Yes, but infrequently; 3=Yes, often; and 4=Yes, all the time). The following factors are provided: Control/Overprotection (e.g., “Your father want you to reveal your secrets to them”; $\alpha = .75$); Emotional Warmth (e.g., “Your father like you just the way you are”; $\alpha = .88$);

Rejection (e.g., “Your father treats you unfairly”; $\alpha = .86$); and Anxious Rearing (e.g., “Your father worries about you making a mistake”; $\alpha = .81$).

Resilience Scale. The Resilience Scale was originally developed by Wagnild and Young (1990), and later modified by Neill and Dias (2001). It consists of 15 items (e.g., “When I make plans, I follow through with them”) using a 7-point Likert scale rating from 1 (totally disagree) to 7 (totally agree) producing a total score of resilience ($\alpha=.92$). All the questionnaires had been adjusted and used in several studies with Greek adolescents, and their factorial structure had been confirmed for the Greek population (Lampropoulou, 2018; Leontopoulou, 2010; Lianos, 2015).

Data analysis

All statistical analyses were performed in SPSS 21. Descriptive statistics were computed to examine the distribution of the variables, including means, standard deviations, and correlation coefficients. The results are presented for all parenting factors, but only the negative ones were used in the regression analyses based on the study’s goal. Normality of data distribution was assessed through skewness and kurtosis values. Pearson’s correlation analysis was performed to explore the associations between the study’s variables. Independent samples *t*-tests were conducted to assess gender and age-related differences. The five participants who selected “I prefer to self-describe” for the gender variable were excluded from analyses where gender was used as a grouping variable, due to the small size of the group. Hierarchical regression analyses were employed to examine the predictive role of parenting behaviors on adolescents’ ill-being. Finally, moderation analyses were conducted using the PROCESS macro for SPSS (v2.4) to test the moderating role of adolescents’ resilience in the relationship between negative parenting behaviours and adolescents’ ill-being. PROCESS was considered suitable for the study’s goal to test a specific interaction effect between specific paternal parenting practice and resilience on adolescent ill-being. Regression analyses were conducted for all the study’s variables, but only the analyses that produced statistically significant results are presented. All statistical tests were conducted at a significance level of $p < .05$.

Results

Descriptive Data and Bivariate Relations

Asymmetry and kurtosis values indicated a normal distribution of the data allowing for the use of parametric tests. Table 1 presents Pearson’s correlation coefficients, mean scores, and standard deviations for each study’s variable. The highest positive correlations were found between Paternal Emotional Warmth and Satisfaction, and the highest negative correlations were found between Paternal Rejection and Satisfaction. The magnitudes of the correlations between Resilience and Satisfaction were quite high while the most significant correlations between Resilience and Paternal Emotional Warmth ($r = .50$) and Rejection ($r = -.39$; see Table 1).

Table 1. Means, Standard Deviations and Inter-correlations of the Study Variables

Variables	Satisfaction	Ill-being	Paternal Control/ Overprotection	Paternal Emotional Warmth	Paternal Rejection	Paternal Anxious Rearing	Resilience
Satisfaction	--						
Ill-being	-.61**	--					
Paternal Control/Overprotection	-.21**	.13*	--				
Paternal Emotional Warmth	.56**	-.43**	-.19**	--			
Paternal Rejection	-.50**	.43**	.49**	-.67**	--		
Paternal Anxious Rearing	-.18**	.15**	.62**	-.02	.34**	--	
Resilience	.74**	-.39**	-.14*	.50**	-.39**	-.06	--
Means	3.42	2.47	1.96	3.04	1.52	2.39	5.09
Standard deviation	0.72	0.83	0.49	0.62	0.52	0.55	1.12

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

Differences in gender were tested with Student’s *t*-test. The only statistically significant difference was found for Ill-being where girls had statistically significant higher mean score than boys (see Table 2).

Table 2. Results of t-test and Descriptive Statistics for Satisfaction/Ill-being. Paternal Parenting factors and Resilience by Gender

Variables	Girls		Boys		t(324)	Cohen's d
	M	SD	M	SD		
Satisfaction	3.37	0.72	3.52	0.68	-1.68	-0.20
Ill-being	2.62	0.81	2.13	0.76	5.16***	0.61
Paternal Control/Overprotection	1.96	0.51	1.97	0.44	-0.11	-0.01
Paternal Emotional Warmth	3.04	0.64	3.04	0.58	-0.05	-0.01
Paternal Rejection	1.52	0.54	1.51	0.46	0.13	0.01
Paternal Anxious Rearing	2.41	0.57	2.34	0.51	1.03	0.13
Resilience	5.06	1.11	5.16	1.16	-0.74	-0.08

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Differences, however, were found between older and younger adolescents. Student's t -test was performed and statistically significant differences were found for Ill-being ($t_{(324)} = -4.74$, $p < .001$, $d = .52$), Paternal Control/Overprotection ($t_{(324)} = 2.92$, $p < .01$, $d = .33$) and Paternal Emotional Warmth ($t_{(324)} = 2.5$, $p < .05$, $d = .29$; Table 3).

Table 3. Results of t-test and Descriptive Statistics for Satisfaction/Ill-being. Paternal Parenting factors and Resilience by School Level

Variables	Junior High School		Senior High School		t(324)	Cohen's d
	M	SD	M	SD		
Satisfaction	3.45	0.73	3.38	0.69	0.8	0.09
Ill-being	2.28	0.80	2.70	0.81	-4.74***	0.52
Paternal Control/Overprotection	2.02	0.46	1.90	0.51	2.92**	0.33
Paternal Emotional Warmth	3.13	0.59	2.95	0.63	2.5*	0.29
Paternal Rejection	1.51	0.48	1.53	0.55	-0.34	-0.04
Paternal Anxious Rearing	2.44	0.53	2.32	0.55	1.86	0.21
Resilience	5.06	1.12	5.13	1.13	-0.58	-0.06

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Regression Analysis and Moderation by Resilience

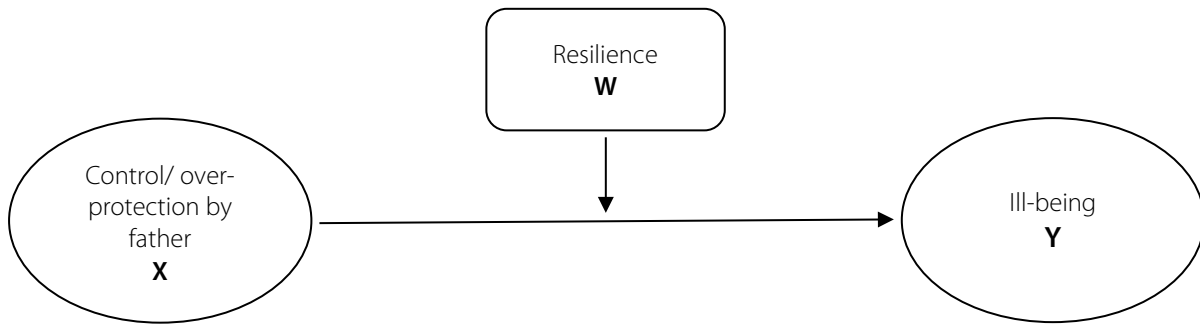
In line with the study's goal multiple regression analyses were performed to assess whether negative paternal parenting predicts adolescents' ill-being, while controlling for sex and age. It was found that 16% of the Ill-being variance was accounted for by the model including paternal Control/Overprotection ($R^2 = .160$, $F(3,311) = 19.71$, $p < .001$). The coefficients examined show that paternal Control/Overprotection significantly contributes to Ill-being prediction ($\beta = .30$, $t = 3.38$, $p = .001$), along with significant effects of sex ($\beta = .46$, $t = 4.98$, $p < .001$) and age ($\beta = -.44$, $t = -5.07$, $p < .001$).

The model including *Rejection* by fathers explained 31.6% of the Ill-being variance ($R^2 = .316$, $F(3,312) = 47.96$, $p < .001$). The coefficients examined show that Rejection by fathers strongly contributes to Ill-being prediction ($\beta = .66$, $t = 8.90$, $p < .001$), with additional significant effects of sex ($\beta = .43$, $t = 5.22$, $p < .001$) and age ($\beta = -.43$, $t = -5.63$, $p < .001$).

Finally, 15% of the variance in Ill-being was explained by the model including paternal Anxious Rearing ($R^2 = .150$, $F(3,298) = 17.52$, $p < .001$). The coefficients examined show that Anxious Rearing by fathers significantly contributes to Ill-being prediction ($\beta = .25$, $t = 3.16$, $p = .002$), alongside significant effects of sex ($\beta = .43$, $t = 4.44$, $p < .001$) and age ($\beta = -.43$, $t = -4.81$, $p < .001$).

The macro PROCESS Procedure for SPSS (v. 2.4) was used (model 1; Hayes, 2013) for assessing whether the negative dimensions of paternal parenting, interact with resilience to predict adolescents' Ill-being. Bias-corrected bootstrap tests with a 95% confidence Interval were conducted in order to evaluate the significance level of the indirect effects. Using random samples with replacement from the original data set, 5,000 bootstrap samples were estimated. Resilience, father's Control/Overprotection and Ill-being were entered in the first step of the analysis. In the second step, the interaction between these factors was entered (Figure 1).

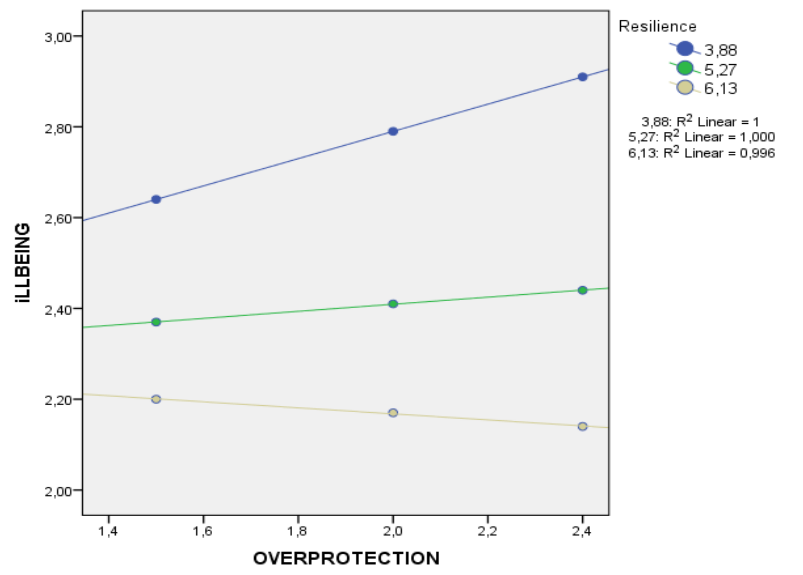
Figure 1. Conceptual Model of the Control/Overprotection by Father and Ill-being Association Moderated by Resilience



A significant effect in Ill-being was identified, due to the interaction between Control/Overprotection by fathers and Resilience, $R^2 = .18$, $F(3, 315) = 22.02$, $p < .001$. Resilience seems to be a significant moderator of the relationship between control/overprotection by father and Ill-being ($b = -0.16$, $t(315) = -2.33$, $p < .001$). The unstandardized simple slope for 1 *SD* below the mean was 0.30 [$t(315) = .65$, $p < .01$, LLCI = 0.08, ULCI = 0.52], the unstandardized simple slope with a mean level was 0.08 [$t(315) = 0.83$, $p = .41$, LLCI = -0.1 ULCI = 0.26], and the unstandardized simple slope for 1 *SD* above the mean was -0.06 [$t(315) = -0.52$, $p < .6$, LLCI = -0.31, ULCI = 0.18] (Figure 2). According to the Johnson-Neyman test, for values of the moderator at and below 4.64 the effect of the predictor was statistically significant ($p < .05$). This suggests that for these values of the moderator, changes in the predictor are associated with significant changes in the dependent variable. For values of the moderator above 4.64 the effect of the predictor on the dependent variable was not statistically significant hence for values above 4.64 changes in the predictor are not associated with significant changes in the dependent variable.

Paternal Rejection and Anxious Rearing were also tested in the moderation analyses, but only the interaction between Control/Overprotection and adolescent Resilience yielded significant results. Therefore, for the sake of parsimony and clarity, only this interaction is presented in detail. Similarly, while Satisfaction was included as part of the initial exploratory analyses, it did not produce significant associations with the main predictors and therefore the results are not presented.

Figure 2. Simple Slopes of Resilience Predicting Ill-being for 1 SD Below, the Mean and 1 SD Above the Mean of Father Control/Overprotection



Discussion

The aim of the present study was to examine the relationship between negative paternal parenting (i.e., rejection, control/overprotection, and anxious rearing) and adolescents' ill-being. Additionally, the study explored whether resilience moderates this relationship, potentially buffering the impact of negative paternal behaviors on adolescents' well-being. For illustrative purposes, analyses involving emotional warmth and satisfaction are presented in the descriptive results, though they are not analyzed in depth. Fathers were selected as the focus of the study due to the relative scarcity of research on their unique role, particularly within the Greek cultural context (Maridaki-Kassotaki et al., 2017).

At first glance, adolescents appear to feel generally satisfied with themselves and their lives, reporting high levels of resilience—findings that are consistent with previous studies conducted in Greece (Hatzichristou et al., 2021; Lampropoulou, 2018; Rees et al., 2016). Regarding paternal parenting practices, the results indicate higher levels of emotional warmth and lower levels of negative parenting, particularly in terms of rejection. These findings align with cross-cultural research showing that emotional warmth is the most commonly perceived parenting behaviour for both mothers and fathers (Filus et al., 2019; Lianos, 2015). Among the negative dimensions, control/overprotection and rejection received the lowest scores, whereas anxious rearing showed a moderately elevated mean score, suggesting that Greek fathers may be perceived by their adolescent children as somewhat anxious or stressed in their parenting approach.

Regarding the first hypothesis, the results showed that negative parenting practices are significantly associated with adolescent ill-being. Paternal rejection emerged as the strongest correlate of ill-being, consistent with previous research suggesting that rejection disrupts secure attachment and emotional regulation during adolescence (Pinquart, 2016). Rejection often encompasses other negative behaviors, such as harsh punishment, disregard for children's perspectives, and even abusive actions—experiences that may be perceived as traumatic and contribute to elevated levels of ill-being (Filus et al., 2019; Kuppens & Ceulemans, 2019; Pinquart, 2017).

Paternal control/overprotection and anxious rearing showed similar associations in the expected direction, but with a lower magnitude compared to rejection. These findings suggest that feelings of rejection are more strongly linked to adolescent ill-being than the other two forms of negative parenting. This result aligns with other studies that have reported a significant negative relationship between parental rejection and children/adolescents' development and psychosocial adjustment (Lianos, 2015; Ogelman, 2015; Putnick et al., 2018).

Parental rejection appears to be the primary parenting practice associated with lower levels of adolescent resilience. Existing literature links resilience with positive parenting and emotional support (Kritzas & Grobler, 2005). Resilience is associated with the development of social and emotional skills, which are largely fostered by parents who engage in positive parenting and is further enhanced by the presence of supportive relationships. Family, particularly parents, serves as the most significant source of strength and support for children and adolescents (Newland, 2014). Stressed and overprotective parents, despite their challenges, may still provide a sense of support in their efforts to protect their children—unlike rejecting parents, whose behaviours tend to alienate and undermine the child's coping capacity. The regression analysis supports this interpretation, as only paternal rejection accounted for a significant proportion of the variance in adolescent ill-being. However, it remains unclear whether rejection leads to ill-being, or if adolescents' ill-being prompts increased parental rejection. Nonetheless, the strength of this association highlights the need for further investigation.

Resilience emerged as a significant moderator in the relationship between paternal control/overprotection and adolescent ill-being, which partially verified the second hypothesis. Specifically, adolescents with lower levels of resilience reported more ill-being when perceiving their fathers as overprotective, whereas those with higher resilience were relatively protected from these adverse effects. These findings support the social-ecological view of resilience as a dynamic buffer that interacts with contextual stressors (Ungar, 2012).

A noteworthy finding, however, is that the moderation effect was significant only at low levels of resilience. Specifically, the relationship between paternal control/overprotection and adolescent ill-being was evident only when resilience level was low. When resilience levels were high, this relationship was no longer significant, suggesting that resilience does not actively enhance well-being in this context, but rather serves as a buffer against the negative effects of paternal control. In other words, a lack of resilience appears to be a critical factor in amplifying the negative impact of intrusive and overprotective paternal behaviours.

Adolescents who lack sufficient resilience seem more vulnerable to the adverse effects of controlling parenting, which may result in heightened levels of ill-being. Conversely, higher resilience levels do not appear to reduce ill-being further, indicating an asymmetrical buffering effect. This is also supported by the absence of a significant correlation between resilience and paternal control/overprotection, suggesting that the two variables are not directly related. Rather, resilience functions as a moderator that mitigates—but does not necessarily reverse—the negative influence of controlling parenting on adolescent well-being.

To summarize, after controlling for sex and age, all three paternal parenting variables remained significant predictors of adolescent ill-being, with paternal rejection emerging as the strongest predictor. However, resilience was found to moderate only the relationship between paternal control/overprotection and ill-being. This suggests that low resilience levels increase adolescents' vulnerability to controlling paternal behaviours, whereas resilience does not appear to buffer the effects of anxious rearing or rejecting parenting.

Although it is beyond the primary scope of the present study, preliminary findings regarding maternal overprotection suggest a different pattern. Initial moderation analyses involving maternal control/overprotection did not yield significant results, indicating that the observed moderating effect applies specifically to paternal overprotection. This distinction may reflect the culturally embedded role of fathers as protectors within Greek society, potentially amplifying the psychological impact of paternal control during adolescence.

Finally, the third hypothesis was supported, since differences were found based on demographic factors. Girls reported higher levels of ill-being, consistent with findings from other studies conducted in Mediterranean countries—a result that may be linked to culturally specific gender roles and expectations (Kaye-Tzadok et al., 2017; Lampropoulou, 2018; Rees et al., 2016). No significant gender differences were observed for the other variables under investigation.

Age was the only other demographic factor for which a significant difference emerged, aligning with previous research (Lampropoulou, 2018; Lianos, 2015). Younger adolescents reported lower life satisfaction and perceived their fathers as more controlling and overprotective compared to older adolescents. A further analysis revealed that the youngest participants in the sample had the highest scores for paternal overprotection. It is possible that fathers continue to perceive their younger adolescents as more vulnerable (i.e., particularly given their recent transition from elementary school), and thus feel the need to exert greater control and protection.

In conclusion, findings indicate that negative paternal parenting—particularly rejection and control/overprotection—is associated with adolescents' ill-being, with paternal rejection emerging as the strongest predictor. Notably, low levels of resilience appear to play a more critical role than high levels of resilience in moderating the relationship between paternal control/overprotection and adolescent ill-being. Furthermore, girls and older adolescents tend to report lower satisfaction compared to boys and younger adolescents. Interestingly, the youngest age group (12–13 years old) perceive their fathers as both more controlling/overprotective and emotionally warm.

Limitations of the Study and Future Suggestions

While the study provides important insights, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the use of convenience sampling restricts the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, given the cross-sectional design of the study and the use of moderation analyses, causality cannot be inferred—it remains unclear whether adolescents' ill-being contributes to negative parenting practices or vice versa. The generalizability of the results is further limited by the geographically restricted sample, which included only adolescents from the Athens area, and by demographic imbalances. Moreover, as data were collected through self-report questionnaires, findings rely solely on participants' subjective perceptions, which may introduce response biases. Finally, although the use of the PROCESS macro for the moderation analysis was deemed suitable given the study's focused scope, future studies could employ structural equation modeling to explore the interactive effects of multiple parenting dimensions.

Given that adolescence is a critical period for identity formation and emotional development, fostering resilience in young individuals could serve as a key protective mechanism against the detrimental effects of negative parenting. Future research should further explore the mechanisms through which resilience operates in this context. Additionally, intervention programs aimed at strengthening adolescent resilience should be prioritized, ensuring that adolescents develop adaptive coping strategies to navigate family-related stressors.

Practical Implications

Despite its limitations, this study offers valuable insights with implications for psychological practice, particularly in fostering adolescent resilience. The study's findings underscore the value of interventions that both support fathers in adopting adaptive parenting practices and enhance resilience among adolescents. School-based programs and family-centered initiatives can benefit from integrating training modules that focus on strengthening father-adolescent communication and fostering resilience. Parent consultation programs can integrate these findings by emphasizing the protective role of emotional warmth and active engagement. Moreover, resilience-building programs for adolescents should be prioritized, focusing on the development of coping strategies that buffer against the detrimental effects of paternal rejection and control/overprotection. By incorporating these findings into parental support services and school-based initiatives, practitioners can design more effective interventions in diverse cultural settings.

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Conflict of interest

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