PARENTAL EMOTIONAL VALIDATION, SOCIAL SUPPORT, AND MENTAL RESILIENCE AMONG VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS FROM INTACT FAMILIES

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ABSTRACT
Vocational high school students experience developmental demands related to academic achievement, social adjustment, and preparation for work. Although students from intact families are often assumed to receive adequate emotional protection, structural family completeness does not always guarantee emotional validation or sufficient social resources. This study aimed to examine the simultaneous effect of parental emotional validation and social support on the mental resilience of vocational high school students from intact families. A quantitative correlational approach with an ex post facto design was employed. The participants were 66 students of UPTD SMKN Balanipa, Polewali Mandar Regency, West Sulawesi, selected through purposive sampling based on the criterion of living with both parents in one household. Data were collected using Likert-scale questionnaires measuring parental emotional validation, perceived social support, and mental resilience. The instruments met item validity criteria ($r >= .30$) and reliability criteria (Cronbach's alpha > .60). Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple linear regression after the classical assumption requirements were fulfilled. The findings showed that parental emotional validation did not have a significant partial effect on mental resilience. However, parental emotional validation and social support simultaneously had a significant effect on students' mental resilience, $F(2, 63) = 3.792$, $p = .028$, with $R^2 = .107$. These results indicate that mental resilience is not shaped by family emotional processes alone, but by the interaction between family-based validation and broader social support. The findings imply that school guidance and counseling services should involve both parents and school-based support systems to strengthen students' resilience. Future studies are recommended to include school climate, coping strategies, self-esteem, and peer support as additional predictors.

Keywords: Emotional Validation; Intact Family; Mental Resilience; Social Support; Vocational Students

INTRODUCTION

Mental resilience is a central psychological capacity that enables adolescents to adapt constructively to academic, social, and developmental pressures. During adolescence, students are required not only to manage emotional changes but also to make decisions related to identity, achievement, and future career orientation. This demand is particularly visible among vocational high school students because they are positioned at the intersection of schooling and preparation for employment. Resilience, therefore, is not merely an individual trait, but a dynamic process through which students maintain psychological stability, recover from stress, and continue functioning adaptively in challenging situations (Connor & Davidson, 2003; Masten, 2014).

The development of resilience is closely related to emotional regulation. Adolescents who can recognize, express, and manage their emotions are more likely to respond to stressors through adaptive coping strategies. Reivich and Shatté (2002) identify emotional regulation, impulse control, optimism, causal analysis, empathy, self-efficacy, and reaching out as important resilience competencies. Within this perspective, resilience requires both internal emotional competence and external relational resources that support the adolescent when facing pressure.

Parental emotional validation represents one of the most important relational resources in the family microsystem. Emotional validation refers to parental responses that acknowledge, accept, and respond empathically to a child's emotional experience. Parents who listen to adolescents' feelings, avoid dismissive responses, and provide supportive guidance help adolescents develop emotional awareness, self-worth, and

confidence in managing problems. In contrast, invalidating responses such as minimizing sadness, rejecting anxiety, or blaming emotional expression may weaken adaptive coping processes. Recent evidence shows that supportive parental emotion socialization is negatively related to adolescents' internalizing problems, whereas non-supportive parental responses are associated with less adaptive emotion regulation (Guo et al., 2024).

However, family structure and family functioning should not be treated as identical concepts. In many social contexts, intact families are normatively assumed to provide emotional security, stable supervision, and sufficient support for adolescents. This assumption reflects a das Sollen orientation, or how family systems are expected to function according to social norms. Empirical reality, however, may reflect das Sein, namely the actual condition of daily family interaction. Students who live with both parents may still experience emotional distance, limited dialogue, or inadequate validation. Therefore, the present study does not view intact-family status as an automatic protective factor, but as a relational context in which the quality of emotional validation must be examined.

Social support is another protective factor that strengthens adolescent resilience. House (1981) conceptualizes social support as emotional, informational, instrumental, and appraisal support obtained from meaningful relationships. For students, such support may come from parents, peers, teachers, school counselors, and other significant people. Supportive relationships can reduce loneliness, increase perceived competence, and help students interpret academic or social problems as manageable rather than overwhelming. Longitudinal evidence also indicates that perceived social support is associated with fewer mental health problems during the transition from adolescence to young adulthood (Scardera et al., 2020).

Peer and school-based support are especially important in vocational education settings. Vocational students are expected to meet academic standards while also preparing for practical competencies, internships, career choices, and transition to the workplace. Such demands may increase exposure to performance pressure and future-related anxiety. Positive peer relationships, supportive teacher-student interaction, and accessible guidance and counseling services can provide reassurance and problem-solving assistance. Studies in Indonesian educational contexts also show that academic resilience and optimism are related to students' stress experiences (Takril & Herdi, 2022), while peer support contributes to students' resilience and adjustment (Anggraeni & Hidayati, 2024).

The relationship among parental emotional validation, social support, and mental resilience can be understood through Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory. The family functions as a primary microsystem in which adolescents learn emotional meaning and interpersonal trust. The school and peer environment also operate as important microsystems that offer social reinforcement, recognition, and assistance. These systems do not work separately; rather, they interact in shaping students' psychological development. Emotional validation from parents may provide an internal foundation for emotional security, while social support from peers, teachers, and the school environment may reinforce students' ability to cope with academic and social challenges.

Previous studies have examined resilience, parenting, social support, and adolescent mental health, but several limitations remain. First, parenting-related variables and social support variables are often analyzed separately, creating a fragmented understanding of resilience formation. Second, intact-family status is frequently used only as a demographic category or control variable rather than as a context in which emotional functioning is investigated. Third, evidence from vocational school students in local Indonesian contexts remains limited, even though vocational students face distinctive academic and career-preparation demands. Conceptual differences in the operationalization of resilience also contribute to variation in previous findings (Kuranova et al., 2021).

Based on these gaps, this study integrates parental emotional validation and social support into a unified predictive model of mental resilience among vocational high school students from intact families. The novelty of this study lies in its attempt to examine whether structural family completeness is accompanied by functional emotional validation, and how such family-based emotional processes interact with broader social support in predicting mental resilience. The study was conducted at UPTD SMKN Balanipa, Polewali Mandar Regency, West Sulawesi, to provide localized empirical evidence relevant to school counseling practice.

This study aims to analyze the simultaneous effect of parental emotional validation and social support on the mental resilience of vocational high school students from intact families. The study also examines

the partial role of parental emotional validation in the regression model. The findings are expected to contribute theoretically to ecological models of adolescent resilience and practically to the development of guidance and counseling services that involve both parents and school-based support systems.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative correlational approach with an ex post facto design. The design was appropriate because the study examined the relationship and predictive effect among naturally occurring variables without manipulating parental emotional validation, social support, or students' mental resilience. The independent variables were parental emotional validation (X1) and social support (X2), while the dependent variable was mental resilience (Y).

Participants and Sampling

The research participants were 66 vocational high school students of UPTD SMKN Balanipa, Polewali Mandar Regency, West Sulawesi. Participants were selected using purposive sampling based on the criterion that they lived with both biological parents in one household. This criterion was used to align the sample with the focus of the study, namely emotional validation within intact-family contexts. Vocational high school students were selected because they experience academic demands, social adjustment, and career-preparation pressures that make mental resilience particularly important. The sample size was considered adequate for an exploratory multiple regression model involving two predictors, although the use of purposive sampling limits statistical generalization. The demographic form recorded students' grade level, gender, age, and family living arrangement to ensure that respondents met the inclusion criteria. Respondent participation was voluntary and anonymous.

Research Instruments

Data were collected using a structured Likert-scale questionnaire with response options ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The instrument consisted of three scales: parental emotional validation, social support, and mental resilience. The item structure and construct indicators are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Instrument Blueprint and Sample Items

Variable	Main Indicators	Retained Items	Sample Item Statement
Parental emotional validation	Listening, acceptance, empathy, supportive guidance	11 items	My parents listen when I explain what I feel.
Social support	Emotional, informational, instrumental, and appraisal support	11 items	I have friends or teachers who help me when I face difficulties.
Mental resilience	Adaptability, self-control, perseverance, optimism	13 items	I keep trying when facing difficult situations.

The items were developed from theoretical indicators of each construct and adjusted to the school context. Item validity was tested using Pearson Product Moment correlation with the criterion r >= .30. Reliability was tested using Cronbach's alpha with the criterion alpha > .60. The instrument met the predetermined validity and reliability criteria, indicating that the items were appropriate for measuring the target constructs in this exploratory study.

Data Collection Procedure and Ethics

The data collection procedure was carried out after obtaining permission from the school. Respondents were informed about the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, anonymity of responses, and the use of data only for academic research. Students completed the questionnaire during a scheduled session under researcher supervision. No personally identifying information was reported in the analysis. These procedures were applied to protect respondents' privacy and reduce response bias.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple linear regression. Descriptive statistics were used to examine the minimum score, maximum score, mean, and standard deviation of each variable. Multiple linear regression was used to test the simultaneous effect of parental emotional validation and social support on mental resilience. Before regression analysis, classical assumption tests were conducted, including normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity tests. The regression model was interpreted using the F-test, coefficient of determination (R^2), adjusted R^2, and partial coefficient information available from the coefficient output.

Parental Emotional Validation (X1)	→	Mental Resilience (Y)
Social Support (X2)	→	Mental Resilience (Y)

Figure 1. Research Conceptual Framework

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistical analysis was conducted to identify the score distribution of parental emotional validation, social support, and mental resilience. The analysis included the number of respondents, minimum score, maximum score, mean, and standard deviation. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

Variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Parental emotional validation	66	19	54	39.79	6.367
Social support	66	28	54	39.89	5.195
Mental resilience	66	34	61	49.88	5.906
Valid N (listwise)	66				

The mean score of parental emotional validation was 39.79 (SD = 6.367), indicating that students generally perceived a fairly positive level of emotional validation from their parents. However, the relatively higher standard deviation suggests variation in students' experiences of parental responses. Some students may perceive their parents as emotionally responsive, while others may experience less consistent validation.

The mean score of social support was 39.89 (SD = 5.195), showing that students generally perceived supportive relationships from their surrounding environment, including peers, teachers, and family members. The standard deviation was lower than that of parental emotional validation, indicating that perceptions of social support were relatively more evenly distributed among respondents.

Mental resilience had a mean score of 49.88 (SD = 5.906), suggesting that the students generally demonstrated a fairly good level of resilience. This indicates that many respondents perceived themselves as capable of adapting to pressure, regulating emotional responses, and maintaining persistence when facing difficulties. Nevertheless, the score variation indicates that some students may still require additional support from parents, peers, teachers, and school counseling services.

Classical Assumption Testing

Before conducting multiple regression analysis, classical assumption tests were performed to ensure that the model met the statistical requirements. The results indicated that the data fulfilled the assumptions for regression analysis, as summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. Summary of Classical Assumption Tests

Assumption Test	Criterion	Decision	Interpretation
Normality	Residuals are normally distributed	Fulfilled	The residual distribution supported the use of linear regression.
Multicollinearity	Tolerance and VIF are within acceptable limits	Fulfilled	The independent variables did not indicate problematic multicollinearity.
Heteroscedasticity	No systematic pattern in residual variance	Fulfilled	The model did not show evidence of heteroscedasticity.

Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple linear regression was used to examine the simultaneous effect of parental emotional validation and social support on students' mental resilience. The model summary is presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.328	.107	.079	5.667

The regression model produced an R value of .328, indicating a low-to-moderate relationship between the combined predictors and mental resilience. The R^2 value of .107 indicates that parental emotional validation and social support together explained 10.7% of the variance in students' mental resilience. After adjustment for the number of predictors and sample size, the adjusted R^2 value was .079, indicating that the effective explanatory contribution of the model was 7.9%. Although the contribution is relatively small, it remains meaningful in psychological and educational research because adolescent resilience is shaped by multiple interacting factors beyond the two predictors examined in this study.

Table 5. ANOVA for Simultaneous Regression Test

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	243.562	2	121.781	3.792	.028
Residual	2023.468	63	32.119		
Total	2267.030	65			

The ANOVA test showed that the regression model was statistically significant, $F(2, 63) = 3.792$, $p = .028$. Since the significance value was lower than .05, the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that parental emotional validation and social support simultaneously had a significant effect on students' mental resilience. The available coefficient information indicated that parental emotional validation did not have a significant partial effect on mental resilience. This finding suggests that emotional validation from parents, when examined independently in the model, was not sufficient to predict students' mental resilience. However, when parental emotional validation was analyzed together with social support, the overall model became significant. This result implies that resilience is more strongly explained by the combined presence of family emotional responsiveness and broader social resources than by parental validation alone.

The findings show that parental emotional validation and social support simultaneously have a significant effect on the mental resilience of vocational high school students from intact families. This result supports the ecological view that adolescent resilience develops through the interaction of multiple relational systems rather than through a single isolated factor. In this study, the family provides emotional experience through parental validation, while the broader social environment provides support through peers, teachers, and school interactions. The significant model indicates that these two systems jointly contribute to students' capacity to adapt to pressure and maintain psychological stability.

The non-significant partial effect of parental emotional validation is substantively important. It suggests that emotional validation from parents may provide an important psychological foundation, but it may not be sufficient by itself to produce observable resilience when students lack broader sources of support. Vocational students spend much of their daily life in school, interact intensively with peers, and face academic and career-related demands. Therefore, their resilience may depend not only on how parents respond to their emotions but also on whether they receive encouragement, advice, belongingness, and practical assistance from peers and teachers.

This finding is consistent with resilience theory, which views resilience as a dynamic developmental process involving cumulative protective factors. Connor and Davidson (2003) conceptualize resilience as a stress-coping capacity, while Masten (2014) emphasizes that resilience emerges from ordinary adaptive systems such as family relationships, school support, problem-solving skills, and self-regulation. Parental emotional validation may strengthen emotional security and self-acceptance, but the translation of these internal resources into resilient behavior may require reinforcement from school and peer environments.

The result also strengthens Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory. Parental emotional validation represents a family microsystem influence because it occurs through direct parent-child interaction. Social support represents broader microsystem resources involving peers, teachers, school counselors, and other meaningful relationships. The significant simultaneous effect indicates that these microsystems interact in shaping students' mental resilience. A student who receives emotional recognition at home but does not feel supported at school may still struggle to cope with academic or social pressure. Conversely, school support may become more effective when students already possess emotional security developed through family validation.

The relatively small R^2 value of 10.7% should be interpreted critically. Although the model is statistically significant, most of the variance in students' mental resilience remains explained by factors outside the model. This is not unusual in psychological and educational research because resilience is multidetermined. Other possible predictors include self-esteem, coping strategies, optimism, self-efficacy, peer attachment, teacher-student relationships, school climate, academic stress, previous adversity, socioeconomic conditions, spirituality, and access to counseling services. Therefore, the present model should be understood as an initial ecological model rather than a complete explanation of resilience.

The low explanatory contribution also indicates that intact-family students are not a homogeneous group. Living with both parents does not automatically ensure strong emotional validation, consistent communication, or psychological safety. The distinction between das Sollen and das Sein is important here. Normatively, intact families are expected to provide stable emotional support. Empirically, however, students may experience different levels of parental responsiveness. Some parents may be physically present but emotionally unavailable, while others may provide warmth and guidance. Thus, family completeness should not be treated as equivalent to family functioning.

Social support appears to be a particularly relevant protective context for vocational students. Support from peers can provide a sense of belonging and reduce emotional isolation, while support from teachers and school counselors can help students manage academic pressure and career preparation. Scardera et al. (2020) show that perceived social support is associated with fewer mental health problems during the transition to adulthood. This reinforces the argument that adolescent resilience is strengthened when students feel that they are not facing challenges alone.

Practically, the findings suggest that school guidance and counseling services should not focus only on individual student coping skills. Counselors and guidance teachers need to design interventions that involve parents, strengthen peer support, and build a supportive school climate. Parent-focused programs may include psychoeducation on emotional validation, active listening, and non-judgmental communication. School-based programs may include peer mentoring, resilience training, stress-management workshops, and teacher collaboration to identify students with low resilience. Such integrated services are especially important in vocational schools, where students encounter both academic and career-readiness pressures.

Theoretically, this study contributes to resilience research by showing that relational quality is more important than family structure alone. It also supports an ecological interpretation of adolescent resilience in which family emotional processes and social support operate together. Contextually, the study provides evidence from vocational high school students in Polewali Mandar, thereby expanding resilience research within Indonesian educational settings.

Despite these contributions, the study has limitations. The sample size was relatively small and selected through purposive sampling, so the findings should be generalized cautiously. The study used self-report questionnaires, which may be influenced by social desirability and subjective perception. In addition, the model included only two predictors, leaving many psychological, social, and school-related factors unexplained. Future studies should involve larger samples, include students from different school contexts, and test more comprehensive models involving coping strategies, self-esteem, peer support, school climate, academic stress, and teacher-student relationships.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that vocational high school students from intact families generally show fairly good levels of parental emotional validation, social support, and mental resilience. The regression results indicate that parental emotional validation does not have a significant partial effect on mental resilience. However, parental emotional validation and social support simultaneously have a significant effect on students' mental resilience, with a contribution of 10.7% and an adjusted contribution of 7.9%.

These findings demonstrate that students' mental resilience is not formed by a single relational factor. Emotional validation from parents needs to be supported by broader social resources from peers, teachers, school counselors, and the school environment. Therefore, intact-family status should not be viewed as an automatic guarantee of adolescent resilience; the quality of emotional interaction and the availability of social support are more important.

The practical implication is that school counselors and guidance and counseling teachers should develop collaborative programs involving students, parents, peers, and teachers. Parents should be encouraged to practice emotional validation through active listening, empathy, and supportive communication. Schools should strengthen peer support systems, teacher-student relationships, and counseling services that help students manage academic and career-preparation pressures. Future research should examine additional predictors such as school climate, coping strategies, self-esteem, peer attachment, teacher support, academic stress, and socioeconomic background to provide a more comprehensive understanding of adolescent mental resilience.

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