

# **The mechanisms of moderating effect of social support from friends on adolescent's emotional maladjustment: A Taiwanese perspective**

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## **Summary**

Previous researches which taking family-stress adjustment viewpoints mostly attempt to examine on the direct consequence of parental divorce and the following dysfunction to adolescents' emotional outcome, however, to search further for the influentially moderating factors inside and outside the family context in order to buffer the negative linkage between divorced family structure and adolescents' emotional problem seems much more effective.

Therefore, the reason why our initial concerns of this study highlights not only on the negative constrains and effects of parental absence on adolescents' emotion, but expect to take a positive-psychological stand as the leading research perspective to view the many influences of family processes on well beings of adolescents, especially on those who are facing or have encountered family changes. In this way, we then have confidences claiming that even divorce is an event that inevitably happens because of marital conflict or dissolution, there still exist opportunities and possibilities for those adolescents who are vulnerable to family strains and instability to become even resilient over time.

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the effects of social supports obtained from contexts on adolescents' emotional maladjustment, with the data derived from Taiwan Youth Project (TYP), a panel study on Taiwanese youths, which includes around 2,800 respondents from three different geographical locations of Taiwan (i.e. Taipei city, Taipei county and I-lan county).

Several facets are conducted for the attempts to examine the mutual influence with a resilient perspective for a deeper understanding on adolescents who confront negative life events, especially focusing on the divorce issue. Economic disadvantage in this study is regarded as a selective indicator for hardship, while depression is treated as a vulnerable outcome a maladjusted teenager may display.

Through the investigation on the mechanism that: 1) what influential resources one own and 2) what protective factors can facilitate one's competence being able to bounce back from disadvantageous family situations and emotional problems, this study employs Structural Equation Model (SEM) model comparison procedures to test the theoretical arguments.

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**Up to the present, our analyses results show, interestingly, that owning friendships, with best friends' assists and concerns when facing frustrations make adolescents in divorced families have better chances to overcome family events. This finding is consistent with previous research findings and resilient perspectives, implying that supports from friends are crucial for those under transition and adversity. We conclude that interpersonal relationships are what really count, rather than apparent parents' marriage status or family structure that attribute directly to adolescent's emotional problems. We further discuss the implications of our findings under the considerations of unique Eastern - Asia cultural traditions.**