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Executive Function affects Resilience with Different Cognitive Mechanisms between Adolescence and Emerging Adulthood

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Abstract

Executive function is a cognitive control system contributes uniquely to resilience (Greenberg, 2006; Obradovic, 2016). This study looked into resilience development during its controversial age period in cognitive perspective, aims to explore how its components (i.e., cognitive flexibility, inhibitory control, and working memory) affect resilience in different age groups. Data were collected in middle schools and universities (N=197). Participants were asked to join a series of lab experiments and questionnaires in a psychological lab. Results showed resilience as well as executive function in algorithmic mind level develop from adolescence to emerging adulthood. Cognitive flexibility plays central role in functioning resilience with various cognitive mechanisms for different populations. With the identification of cognitive mechanisms underlying the relation between cognitive flexibility subsets (i.e., reactive flexibility and spontaneous flexibility) and resilience, this study contributes a cognitive perspective for better understanding of resilience before challenging events happen.