Exploring the Relationship of Family Communication Patterns with Assertiveness and Academic Resilience among College Students

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of

Master of Science in Psychology

By

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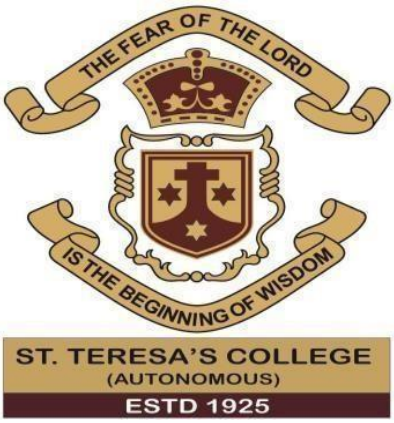

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This is to certify that the dissertation entitled, “Exploring the Relationship of Family Communication Patterns with Assertiveness and Academic Resilience among college students”, is a bonafide record submitted by Fathima Thasneem K.M, Reg.no. SM23PSY010, of St. Teresa’s College, Ernakulam under the supervision and guidance of Ms. Princy Thobias, and that it has not been submitted to any other university or institution for the award of any degree or diploma, fellowship, title or recognition before.

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the project entitled “Exploring the Relationship of Family Communication Patterns with Assertiveness and Academic Resilience among college students” is a bonafide work done by Fathima Thasneem K.M, under the supervision of Princy Thobias, Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, St. Teresa’s College, Ernakulam, in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of the post graduate degree of M. Sc Psychology. I also affirm that this work has not been submitted before for the award of any degree or diploma elsewhere.

Place: Ernakulam Fathima Thasneem K.M

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Abstract

McLeod & Chaffee (1972, 1973) developed the original Family Communication Patterns (FCP) model to describe families' predictable communication tendencies and explain how parents socialize children to process external information, particularly mass media messages. Conversation orientation and conformity orientation are the two main components of family communication patterns (FCPs). This study aimed to examine the relationship of family communication patterns with assertiveness and academic resilience among 271 college students. The tools used were Revised family communication patterns questionnaire (RFCPQ; 2002), Rathus assertiveness schedule (1973), and Academic Resilience Scale (Cassidi, 2016). Data were analyzed using Jamovi, employing non-parametric tests, including the Mann-Whitney U test for group comparisons and Spearman's correlation analysis for assessing relationships between variables. The results indicated that conversation orientation showed a significant positive relationship with assertiveness and academic resilience. Conformity orientation had no significant relationship with assertiveness and academic resilience. It was found that there is a significant difference in gender whereas, males scored higher in assertiveness and females scored higher in academic resilience, and females scored high in both conversation and conformity orientation. Among the family communication styles studied, conversation orientation was found to be the most impactful.

Keywords: Family communication pattern, conversation orientation, conformity orientation, assertiveness, academic resilience.

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Chapter I

Introduction

Background of the study

Communication serves as the vital link that weaves together the intricate dynamics of family bonds within the intricate fabric of human relationships. Frequently seen as the foundation of social life, the family serves as an ecosystem featuring a broad range of interactions, from the ordinary to the profound. Carter and McGoldrick (2005) assert that the family serves as the primary environment for our growth and development, as it is where we establish our initial relationships and interact with the external world. A significant aspect of an individual's life is their family, the foundation of which can last a lifetime. Families are beautiful due to their diversity, similar to mosaic art. It’s truly astonishing how varied each individual in the same family can be when it comes to personality. Moghe (2016) conducted a study at Savitribai Phule Pune University, using perceived parenting style as a mediating variable to explore the influence of parents' communication and parenting approaches on the personalities of teenagers. The findings indicated that both the communication methods of parents and the personalities of teenagers were significantly influenced by the perceived styles of parenting. Additionally, it was demonstrated that a significant relationship existed between the personalities of teenagers and the communication styles of their parents.

An important social institution that gives people emotional support, socialisation, and a feeling of identity is the family (Brown, 2017). One essential element of a positive family dynamic is effective communication between parents and kids. It has been discovered that family communication styles significantly impact children's self-concept, which in turn affects their behaviour and social well-being. A family's communication patterns have a direct impact on how well it functions, and studies have indicated that when family institutions are weak, other institutions in society may also fail (Johnson, 2018). Effective communication within the family is essential to people's identity formation, emotional health, and socialisation. Families establish a loving atmosphere that encourages resilience, cultural

heritage, conflict resolution skills, and a sense of security by cultivating open and encouraging communication patterns. Effective communication within families is essential for the overall health and success of individuals and the wider community, since the family serves as the basic building block of society.

The participants in the study are young adults, each one distinct in their own way. This age group typically has a critical health condition and high mortality rates, and it is thought to be a vital developmental stage where certain unmet health requirements and disparities are given the proper care. In order to guarantee the general health and well-being of young adults, the Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine advocates for, leads, and promotes health policy. Many psychologists and academics believe that there are no precise rules for deciding which ages belong in the young adult category. There is disagreement about the precise age range for young adults, with the WHO classifying young people as adolescents and young people between the ages of 10 and 24 and the UN defining youth as those between the ages of 15 and 24. According to a survey by the Institute of Medicine, young adults confront a variety of difficulties. The most frequent issues that young adults deal with include chronic sickness, violence, and access to healthcare.

Between the ages of 18 and 25, young adulthood is a distinct developmental stage that marks the passage from adolescence to adulthood. In addition to obtaining freedom and autonomy, this stage is marked by important developmental activities that enable the young adult to engage in self-exploration and establish a personal identity and belief system. Young adults experience elevated levels of preventable health issues and deaths due to motor vehicle crashes, homicide, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), substance abuse, and mental health challenges, even though most of the 31.2 million individuals aged 18 to 24 (Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics [Child Stats, 2014]) are in good health (Institute of Medicine [IOM] & National Research Council [NRC], 2014).

Young adulthood must be acknowledged as a unique developmental stage in order to provide the best treatment possible. Young adults are at a higher risk for avoidable causes of morbidity and death than adolescents and middle-aged adults because they have higher rates of risk-taking behaviours and encounter their own distinct developmental challenges. From a psychological standpoint, the difficulties are significant and different from those of teenagers and adults. The context of the wider world, which is changing quickly due to all the stressors that these people face on a daily basis, has an impact on their typical behaviour. Individuals in that group undergo a wide range of biological changes, but these changes are not limited to biological changes; they also include psychological changes that impact behaviour as individuals age. College-bound adults and those around them experience some stress as a result of these changes, which impacts and influences the person's relationships with others. At this age, people are typically impulsive, fragile, and heavily influenced by their peer groups and the media. Many researchers estimate that 20% of young adults suffer from a mental disease of some kind, which may include eating disorders of any kind, substance addiction, depression, or suicidal thoughts and actions.

To provide the best care, young adulthood must be acknowledged as a unique developmental stage. Due to their increased incidence of risk-taking behaviors and particular developmental obstacles, young adults are more likely than adolescents and middle-aged people to experience avoidable morbidity and mortality. From a psychological perspective, the challenges are considerable and distinct from those faced by teenagers and adults. The broader world's context, rapidly altering because of the daily stressors these individuals encounter, influences their usual behavior. Members of that group experience various biological transformations, but these transformations extend beyond biology; they also encompass psychological shifts that affect behavior as people grow older. Adults preparing for college and those in their vicinity face a degree of stress due to these changes, affecting

and shaping their relationships with others. At this stage, individuals are usually hasty, delicate, and significantly swayed by their peers and the media. Numerous researchers believe that 20% of young adults experience some form of mental illness, which can encompass various eating disorders, substance dependency, depression, or suicidal thoughts and behaviors.

Family communication pattern (FCP)

Family communication involves both intrapersonal and interpersonal processes, meaning it depends on individual factors and the dynamics within the family system. According to Koerner & Fitzpatrick (2002), a complete understanding of family communication must account for both intersubjectivity—the shared meanings family members assign to communicative behaviors, rooted in relational cognition—and interactivity—the interdependent creation, use, and interpretation of symbols, understood through interpersonal behavior. A comprehensive theory must explore the interplay between relational cognition and interpersonal behavior (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2002).

McLeod & Chaffee (1972, 1973) developed the original Family Communication Patterns (FCP) model to describe families' predictable communication tendencies and explain how parents socialize children to process external information, particularly mass media messages. They based their work on the cognitive theory of coorientation, a concept from social cognition (Heider, 1946, 1958; Newcomb, 1953) that describes how individuals evaluate shared objects in their environment. Coorientation involves three attributes: agreement (shared evaluations), accuracy (correct perceptions of others' evaluations), and congruence (alignment between one's own evaluation and perception of others' evaluations). These attributes often lead to shared social reality through balanced cognition and understanding (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2004).

McLeod & Chaffee identified two strategies for achieving agreement in families: socio-orientation, which emphasizes conformity to others' views, and concept-orientation, which focuses on discussing and evaluating objects collaboratively. They proposed that these strategies affect children's media processing behaviors, with socio-oriented families encouraging reliance on others for meaning and concept-oriented families fostering independent analysis of media messages. These insights led to the creation of the FCP instrument to measure family communication tendencies, primarily in media research.

Fitzpatrick & Ritchie (1990, 1993, 1994) later refined the FCP model, reconceptualizing socio-orientation as conformity orientation (emphasizing family hierarchy and agreement) and concept-orientation as conversation orientation (encouraging open discussions and individual expression). Their Revised Family Communication Patterns (RFCP) instrument expanded measurement reliability and focused on family communication behaviors more broadly. Conversation-oriented families encourage independent meaning-making through discussion, while conformity-oriented families emphasize adherence to parental views and discourage dissent (Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1990).

Children's emotional development is based on interpersonal communication, often known as family communication, between parents and children. Children learn how to connect with people, understand their actions, and feel a range of emotions through family communication. Conversation orientation and conformity orientation are the two main components of family communication patterns (FCPs). While conformity orientation relates to children's loyalty to their parents and older family members as well as the uniformity of family members' views, values, and beliefs, conversation orientation describes how family members communicate with one other constantly and on their own (Wittenberg, 2012).

Two dimensions of family communication pattern

Conversation Orientation. Conversation orientation refers to the degree to which families encourage open and frequent communication on a wide range of topics. Families high in conversation orientation engage in frequent, spontaneous, and unrestricted discussions, sharing personal thoughts, feelings, and activities (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2002). These families view communication as central to family life and believe it plays a key role in educating and socializing children (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2002). Decisions and group activities are openly discussed, and everyone's input is valued. Conversely, families low in conversation orientation communicate less frequently and on fewer topics. Personal thoughts and feelings are rarely exchanged, and decisions or activities involving the family are not often discussed in detail, with limited input from members (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2002).

Conformity Orientation. Conformity orientation reflects the extent to which families emphasize shared attitudes, values, and beliefs, often creating a climate of homogeneity. Families high in conformity orientation tend to prioritize a traditional family structure, characterized by cohesiveness and hierarchy. In these families, relationships within the family are valued above external relationships, and resources such as space and money are expected to be shared among members (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2002). Family schedules are coordinated to maximize time together, and members are expected to subordinate personal interests to those of the family. Parents typically make decisions for the family, while children are expected to align with their parents' wishes.

In contrast, families low in conformity orientation value less cohesive and hierarchical structures. They believe relationships outside the family are as important as those within the family, and they prioritize the personal growth and independence of individual family members, even if it weakens the family structure. Low-conformity families value personal

space and encourage individuality, often subordinating family interests to personal ones (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2002b).

The effects of conformity orientation on family communication often depend on its interaction with conversation orientation. These two dimensions influence family communication patterns jointly, such that the impact of one dimension is moderated by the other. For instance, the degree to which conformity orientation affects family outcomes may vary depending on the level of conversation orientation, and vice versa (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2002, 2004). Together, these dimensions create four distinct family types—consensual, pluralistic, protective, and laissez-faire—which are theoretically significant as they represent unique combinations of communication behaviors within families.

Family types

The following four forms of FCPs, or four sorts of families, are produced by the various interactions between conversation orientation and conformance orientation:

Consensual Families. Families high in both conversation and conformity orientation are termed *consensual*. These families experience a balance between open communication and maintaining family hierarchy. Parents actively listen to their children and explain their decisions, values, and beliefs, aiming for their children to adopt their perspectives. While volatile conflict is viewed as harmful, consensual families value problem-solving and conflict resolution to maintain harmony. Children in these families tend to value family discussions and adopt their parents' values (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 1997).

Pluralistic Families. Pluralistic families, high in conversation orientation but low in conformity orientation, engage in open, unconstrained discussions on diverse topics. Parents value their children's independence and encourage participation in decision-making without enforcing agreement. Opinions are evaluated based on argument merit rather than authority. These families are low in conflict avoidance, addressing disagreements openly and resolving

them positively. Children learn to value communication, develop autonomy, and gain confidence in decision-making (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 1997).

Protective Families. Protective families, low in conversation orientation but high in conformity orientation, emphasize obedience to authority and discourage open communication. Parents make decisions without explaining their reasoning and expect compliance. Conflict is viewed negatively, and family members are discouraged from expressing disagreements. Limited communication leads to underdeveloped conflict-resolution skills. Children in these families learn to devalue family conversations and lack confidence in their decision-making abilities (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 1997).

Laissez-Faire Families. Families low in both conversation and conformity orientation are classified as *laissez-faire*. Communication in these families is minimal and often detached, involving few topics. Parents show little interest in their children's decisions, encouraging independence but offering minimal support or guidance. Emotional disconnection is common, and conflicts are rare due to the lack of interaction. Children from laissez-faire families often question their decision-making abilities due to the absence of parental involvement or support (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 1997).

Children are vulnerable to many risks because conversation orientation is very low in protective and laissez-faire families (Yang, 2013). Furthermore, children in laissez-faire families are emotionally divorced from their parents since there is no investment in their ability to make decisions. Conversely, pluralistic families promote children's decision-making, which results in a low compliance orientation in these households (Koerner, 2002). The various facets of family members' personality traits are strongly influenced by FCP. For example, it might tangentially aid in the development of assertiveness in teenagers, such that teens from consensual, pluralistic homes are more assertive than those from laissez-faire,

protective homes. Studies have also revealed a strong link between students' and parents' methods of raising their children.

Assertiveness

"Assertiveness refers to the ability to express one's rights, interests, and beliefs honestly while respecting others' rights" (Rathus, 1973). Rakos (1991) distinguishes between positive assertiveness, such as giving compliments, admitting mistakes, and expressing positive feelings, and negative assertiveness, such as refusing requests, expressing unpopular opinions, and asking others to change their behavior. Assertiveness has numerous benefits, including increased self-confidence, improved goal-setting, reduced social anxiety, and better listening skills (Eason, 2018; Pourjali & Zarnaghash, 2010). A lack of assertiveness is linked to low self-esteem, higher anxiety, and extreme passivity (Marano, 2004). Studies also show a strong correlation between assertiveness and self-esteem in Indian adolescents (Shanmgan & Kathyayini, 2017), highlighting its importance in helping young adults build confidence, identify strengths, and solidify their identity (Çok & Karaman, 2008).

Pioneers in the study of assertiveness, Wolpe and Lazarus (1969) defined assertiveness as a way of expressing emotions, other than anxiety, in a socially acceptable manner that included the recognition and appropriate expression of all affective states (Zuercher, 1983). According to Ranger and Avtgis (2006), assertiveness is broadly defined as the propensity for people to communicate their preferences, opinions, or wants to others in order to accomplish goals. Those who are more assertive are more inclined to act in an assertive manner. Accordingly, a personality trait that signifies "any distinguishable, relatively enduring way in which one individual differs from others" is assertiveness (Guilford, 1959, p. 6). Nonetheless, researchers studying personality structure and communication identify more general personality qualities, which include assertiveness as one of its more particular subtypes (Costa & McCrae, 1980; Rancer & Avtgis, 2006). Since

assertiveness also implies eagerness and desire to communicate with others, academics typically view assertiveness as a sub-trait of extroversion, the wider personality feature. Since assertiveness is a trait that only appears in the context of social interaction, communication scholars view assertiveness as a communication trait because it is "an abstraction constructed to account for enduring consistencies and differences in message-sending and message-receiving behaviours among individuals" (Infante et al., 2003, p. 77).

Standing up for one's rights, declining unreasonable requests, making requests yourself, actively voicing disagreements, and directly expressing thoughts, feelings, and beliefs in "direct, honest, and appropriate ways which do not violate another person's rights" are just a few examples of the behavioural operationalizations of assertive communication (Lange & Jakubowski, 1976, p. 7). This last differentiation clears up any potential confusion between assertiveness and other comparable terms, like aggression. Aggressive communication is symbolic behaviour meant to sway others, just like assertive communication does. However, aggressiveness is a harmful feature because it relates to a person's propensity to act in ways that are "designed to deny, humiliate, and depreciate others" (Rich & Schroeder, 1976, p. 1083), in contrast to assertiveness, which academics view as a constructive trait (Rancer & Avtgis, 2006).

According to Lashbrook and Lashbrook (1979), “assertiveness is a communicative quality that is symptomatic of other psychological traits that are highly valued in society, like ambition, competitiveness, and confidence”. In a similar vein, assertive displays are often associated with perceptions of power, extroversion, and trust (Snavely, 1981); conversely, a lack of assertiveness is associated with perceptions of submissiveness and introversion (Lashbrook & Lashbrook, 1979). Additionally, listeners usually use speakers' assertiveness as a social heuristic, confusing it with other admirable character traits like "competence" or "deservedness". Accordingly, being able to project assertiveness—even when neither of the

aforementioned two traits is present—represents a crucial social skill because people who are assertive tend to produce more positive outcomes for themselves than people who are not. Likewise, Rich and Schroeder (1976) also conceptualize assertiveness as a skill. While the distinction between "skills" (patterns of behavior individuals may learn to improve over time) and "traits" is frequently a muddy one (Spitzberg, 2003), the body of research concerned with "assertiveness training" suggests that regardless of baseline levels stemming from heredity and personality, assertiveness is a social competence that can be learned and improved upon over time (Alberti & Emmons, 1974; Hollandsworth, 1977; Rich & Schroeder, 1976).

Factors influencing assertiveness

Factors influencing assertiveness include education, gender, parenting styles, family income, and psychological empowerment (Nakhaee et al., 2017; Niyogi et al., 2020; Samuel & Chandrasekaran, 2018). Asians are generally found to be less assertive due to non-confrontational communication norms (Singhal & Nagao, 1993). In India, where assertiveness is often misunderstood as aggression or disrespect, studying the factors that contribute to high assertiveness can help promote this behavior. Understanding these facilitators may provide valuable insights to encourage assertiveness among individuals and challenge cultural misconceptions.

Cultural influences significantly affect assertiveness. Traditional Asian cultures often value indirect communication and view assertiveness or directness as disrespectful (Lee & Ciftci, 2014; Jenson, 1999). In India, cultural norms of subservience, humility, and obedience discourage assertiveness, as deviating from societal expectations risks social disapproval (Parray et al., 2020). The patriarchal structure in Indian culture fosters submissiveness and discourages individuals from openly expressing their needs or rights, contrasting with Western cultures that value openness and directness (Tripathi et al., 2010). Collectivistic

cultures, including India, emphasize harmony, hierarchy, and prioritizing group welfare over individual needs, making “saving face” a critical concern (Hinde & Groebel, 1991).

Indian women face unique challenges in being assertive. Middle-aged women report obstacles such as the fear of offending others or being perceived as arrogant (Acharya et al., 2016). They also experience concerns about social exclusion, threats, or loss of privileges for being assertive, often opting for submission to maintain social acceptance. However, some women feel a sense of freedom when they express their emotions assertively (Acharya et al., 2016).

Academic Resilience

“Resilience is referred to the ability to withstand, bounce back, adapt, and move forward positively after experiencing psychological obstacles, challenges, tragedies, or disasters” (Luthar, 2003; Walsh, 2003).

Resilience is often understood as an individual’s ability to adapt and demonstrate competence in the face of significant challenges to their development or achievement (Masten & Coatsworth, 1995). Strumpfer (2001) further defines resilience as the capacity to recover from psychological adversity, involving a motivational drive to overcome challenges and the energy required for goal-directed behaviors, emotions, and thoughts. Resilience theory focuses on two key variables: risk factors and protective factors. Risk factors refer to circumstances that increase vulnerability, such as chronic poverty, child abuse, neglect, minority status, language barriers, violence, acculturation, and racism (Mash & Wolf, 2002). Protective factors, on the other hand, are conditions or resources that reduce the likelihood of adverse developmental outcomes, including strong family support, positive community relationships, mentorship, and individual traits (Garmezy, 1983). Garmezy described protective factors as those that contribute to resilience and adaptation even in the face of significant threats.

Wang et al. (1998) shifted the focus to academic resilience, defining it as “the ability of students to achieve academic and social success despite facing personal and environmental challenges”. Similarly, Catterall (1998) viewed academic resilience as the “improvement in academic performance over time, influenced by factors such as family support and school-based activities”. Academic resilience is also described as the capacity to recover from setbacks in academic performance or feelings of alienation (Cappella & Weinstein, 2001). Luthar, Cicchetti, and Becker (2000) characterized academic resilience as a dynamic developmental process involving both internal (individual) and external (environmental) protective factors that enable at-risk students to adjust and succeed academically. Among these external factors, the role of the family is particularly crucial in fostering academic resilience.

In the first year of college, resilience is particularly crucial since it can facilitate adjustment and lessen anxiety and worry. Students that are resilient show more flexible coping skills (Galatzer-Levy, Burton, & Bonanno, 2012), experience less distress (Kilbert et al., 2014), and have fewer concerns during their adjustment to college (Walsh, 2003). They also have better adjustment outcomes (i.e., grade point average, time management, self-regulation; Johnson et al., 2015). One of the most important aspects of a student's capacity to make a smooth transition to college is their familial environment (Cole, Kennedy, & Ben-Avie, 2009). Thus, some children might be more resilient than others depending on their family dynamics (Haverfield & Theiss, 2017). Indeed, families high in conversation orientation who encourage children to express their own opinions and discuss their troubles might also encourage them to talk and work through their difficulties rather than passively coping (Fitzpatrick & Koerner, 2005).

Conversely, since these kids are brought up to obey their parents' laws and adhere to their beliefs, kids from homes with a high conformity orientation may strongly rely on

parents to help them solve problems or provide advice when they encounter difficulties. Because of the limitations on their autonomy, these parenting practices are associated with poor levels of self-efficacy in children and young people (Odenweller, Booth-Butterfield, & Weber, 2014). Resilience includes a critical component of self-efficacy. In particular, resilience and actually managing stressful situations better are associated with the perception that one can cope (Zimmer-Gembeck & Skinner, 2016).

According to FCP, four family kinds are formed by the interaction of conversation orientation and conformity orientation (Koerner & Schrodt, 2014). The existence of an interaction suggests that the degree of conformity orientation within the family will determine the relationship between conversation orientation and resilience. Put another way, because they were not encouraged to push boundaries and forge their own identities, children in high conformity orientation families—where parents are expected to hold similar values and beliefs—may not reap the full resilience benefits of conversation orientation. One method to practise resilience is to have a strong sense of self to cling to during difficult times (Buzzanell, 2010). In fact, the results of current research support the idea that conformity attitudes and conversation interact (Schrodt & Phillips, 2016; Thorson & Horstman, 2017).

Factors influencing academic resilience

Research has identified four major categories of protective factors that promote resilience (Werner & Smith, 1982, 1992; Werner, 1989, 1993; Garmezy, 1983, 1991, 1993; Masten et al., 1995, 1999; Masten & Coatsworth, 1998; Masten, Best, & Garmezy, 1990). The first category encompasses individual characteristics such as average to high IQ, an internal locus of control, and high self-concept. The second category involves family cohesion and the presence of caring adults. The third focuses on support systems outside the family, including community organizations and churches, while the fourth highlights the role

of schools and caring teachers in fostering resilience (Arnold, 2003). Among these, family factors are particularly significant in developing resilience.

Theoretical framework

According to Albert Bandura's social learning theory, learning occurs through modelling, imitation, and observation. Numerous elements, such as motivation, assertiveness, and attentiveness, are influenced by this type of focus. An individual is likely to learn how to be more assertive if they witness others exhibiting assertive behaviour and those behaviours get positive reactions. (Bandura. A, 1977).

According to social exchange theory, social behaviour results from an exchange process. According to this, people balance the advantages and disadvantages of the social ties they uphold. The attitudes that are conveyed also differ according to the dynamics of the interaction between two individuals and their advantages. As a result, assertiveness may result from this consideration of the benefits and drawbacks of relationships. (Homans, G.C., and Bluu, P.M. 1964).

According to attachment theory, children must develop close relationships with their caretakers in their early years and with other people as they get older. Early attachment styles can influence assertiveness. People who have been successful in building safe relationships find it simpler to express themselves, which enables them to be more forceful, when necessary, in certain spheres of life. (Bowlby J., 1969).

According to Martin and Marsh's (2006) approach, psychological resources including motivation, self-efficacy, and emotional control serve as the foundation for academic resilience. According to empirical research by Koerner and Fitzpatrick (2002), families with a high conversation orientation—which is defined by open discussion and self-directed problem-solving—can greatly improve these resources. Furthermore, Deci and Ryan's (1985) Self-Determination Theory and Bandura's (1986) work on self-efficacy offer strong

theoretical backing for the contribution of intrinsic motivation and self-belief in conquering academic obstacles. Lastly, research by Gross (1998) supports academic resilience by showing how adaptive coping in the face of stress is facilitated by adequate emotional regulation. When taken as a whole, these sources offer compelling evidence that healthy family communication supports and corresponds with the essential elements required for academic resilience.

Chapter II

Review of literature

Family communication pattern and assertiveness

Nakhaee et al. (2017) looked at the connection between adolescents' assertiveness and family communication styles. 400 high school students in Birjand, Iran, participated in the study, and the sample was chosen using multistage random selection. The Revised Family Communication Patterns, the Rathus Assertiveness Schedule, and a demographic questionnaire were used for data collection. SPSS was used for analysis, and techniques like ANOVA and regression were used. The findings showed that protective patterns were the least common while pluralistic family communication patterns were the most prevalent. With the conversation orientation factor explaining 9% of the variance in assertiveness, students from pluralistic households exhibited noticeably higher levels of assertiveness than those from protective and laissez-faire families. These results complement future studies on family-based interventions to improve assertive behaviour by highlighting the influence of family dynamics on teenage assertiveness.

The mediating function of emotion control in the association between assertiveness and family/teacher communication patterns was investigated in a study by Khormaei & Zare (2017). 317 Shiraz University undergraduate students were chosen for the study using random cluster sampling. The Revised Family Communication Patterns Inventory, Teacher Communication Patterns, Emotion Regulation Questionnaire, and Adaptive and Aggressive Assertiveness Scale were used to gather data, and path analysis was used to examine the results. The results showed that assertiveness is positively impacted by conformity orientations and conversation orientation, with family conversation predicting cognitive reappraisal as an emotion regulation factor. As an additional aspect of emotion control, instructor compliance also shown a favourable correlation with suppression. The study concluded that a family climate with a conversation orientation fosters cognitive reappraisal,

which enhances adaptive assertiveness, providing insights for improving assertiveness through communication and emotion regulation strategies.

Family communication pattern and academic resilience

A study by Hall, E. D., Shebib, S. J., & Scharp, K. M. (2020) examined the mediating role of helicopter parenting in the relationship between family communication patterns and resilience in first-semester college students. This study investigated the connections between student resilience, helicopter parenting, and the family environment using the family communication patterns theory (FCP). Survey data from 2,253 first-semester college students in the US were used to test two mediation models. Perceived helicopter parenting behaviours were positively correlated with both conformity and conversational orientations. Only conversational orientation, nevertheless, showed a favourable correlation with resilience. The association between FCP and resilience was mediated by helicopter parenting.

Seo & Kwon (2016) investigated to determine how 259 nursing students' academic resilience was affected by their family communication styles and interpersonal communication skills. Descriptive statistics and regression analysis were used to examine the data. The results showed a high relationship between academic resilience, conversation-oriented family communication, and interpersonal communication abilities. Along with personality traits and academic success, conversational orientation and interpersonal skills were important predictors of resilience. In order to improve resilience, the study focused on incorporating the development of communication skills into familial and academic settings. These findings point to specific tactics for enhancing communication abilities and encouraging dialogue-focused family dynamics for greater success and adaptation.

Sabri et al. (2015) investigated the mediating role of emotional intelligence in the relationship between family communication patterns and resilience among 222 high school students. Conversational orientation, emotional intelligence, and resilience were found to be

positively correlated, whereas conformity orientation was found to be negatively correlated. The relationship between resilience and conversation orientation was mediated by emotional intelligence, underscoring the significance of emotional intelligence as a developmental determinant. According to the results, promoting family discussions improves emotional intelligence, which in turn increases resilience.

Using academic resilience as a mediator, Akbari et al. (2014) examined how family communication patterns predicted test anxiety in 291 first-year high school students. Validated questionnaires were used to gather data, and multiple regression analysis was used for analysis. The findings indicated that whereas conformity orientation raised test anxiety, family conversation orientation decreased test anxiety and positively predicted academic resilience. The association between test anxiety and conversation orientation was completely mediated by academic resilience. According to the study's findings, exam anxiety can be considerably decreased by encouraging resilient and open family communication. These results emphasise how family relationships affect students' academic achievement and emotional health.

Zarei et al. (2013) investigated the connection between 345 female high school students in Bandar Abbas and their quality of life, resilience, and family communication patterns. The study, which used multistage random cluster sampling, discovered that while both conversation and conformity orientations predicted quality of life, conversation orientation strongly predicted resilience. Additionally, resilience was a substantial predictor of quality of life, highlighting the importance of family communication in influencing coping mechanisms and emotional development. According to the study's findings, open family relationships help students become more resilient and better manage a range of outside obstacles.

Family communication pattern

Bakhtiari et al. (2024) looked at 461 university students in Babol, Iran, to see if family communication patterns could predict behavioural health. Scales assessing stress, anxiety, depression, self-esteem, and interpersonal communication abilities were used to gather data, which were then subjected to regression and correlation analysis. The findings indicated that while conversation orientation favourably impacted self-esteem and communication abilities, it negatively predicted stress, anxiety, and sadness. On the other hand, conformity orientation had a negative effect on self-esteem but a favourable correlation with stress, anxiety, and sadness. These results emphasise the detrimental consequences of strict obedience and the necessity of open family communication to enhance students' behavioural and mental health.

Nazir & Adli (2023) used random sampling to choose 315 participants and evaluated the relationship between youth self-concept and family communication patterns in rural Malaysia. The study found strong correlations between conversational orientation and several areas of self-concept, such as social, familial, ethical, personal, and physical, using the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale and the Revised Family Communication Patterns Survey. While conformity orientation was somewhat linked to moral and ethical self-concept, it had weaker associations with these characteristics. The study emphasises how family communication affects young people's self-concept and promotes candid and compassionate communication to improve rural youths' self-concept and general well-being. Families ought to establish nurturing environments where kids can develop and express themselves.

In Ahvaz, Iran, Fard (2020) investigated the connection between sixth-grade children' family communication patterns, resilience, and adjustment. Data were gathered using established measures of family communication patterns, resilience, and adjustment through multi-stage cluster sampling. Pearson correlation and regression analysis were used for analysis. According to the study, resilience and adjustment were positively correlated with

conversation orientation, and both variables significantly predicted resilience and family communication patterns. Conversely, there was no discernible correlation between conformity orientation and resilience or adjustment. The results highlight how open communication helps children become more resilient and adaptive. Children's emotional and social development can be improved when families place a high value on supportive interactions and active listening.

Assertiveness

Venkatesh, S. (2019) performed a study on the association between assertiveness and self-esteem among adolescents. The purpose of the study was to determine the connection between teenage students' assertiveness and self-esteem. 164 kids were selected at random from Chennai high schools to make up the sample. The Assertiveness Questionnaire, created by Erickson, Noonan, McCall, and Monroe (2015), and the Self-esteem Scale, created by Rosenberg (1965), were the instruments utilised to measure the variables. The "t'" test and Pearson Product Moment Correlation were used to analyse the data. The study's findings showed that among teenage students, assertiveness and self-esteem are significantly correlated. Additionally, it has been discovered that teenage boys are more forceful and have higher self-esteem than teenage girls. Additionally, there is no discernible difference between them in terms of assertiveness and self-worth depending on the kind of household.

Sarkova, M. (2013) studied the relationships among teenagers' self-esteem, psychological health, and assertiveness. This study investigated the relationships among teenagers' self-esteem, psychological health, and assertive behaviour. There were 1,023 pupils in the sample. Hierarchical linear regression was used to analyse the data. Two dimensions of the Scale for Interpersonal Behaviour (distress and performance), two factors of the General Health Questionnaire-12 (social dysfunction and depression/anxiety), and two factors of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (positive and negative self-esteem) were used. It

was discovered that both aspects of assertiveness were linked to psychological well-being and self-esteem, and that the more nervous respondents felt in assertive circumstances, the less often they engaged in them.

Academic Resilience

The impact of authoritative parenting on pupils' development of academic resilience was examined by Fauziah, Wiyono, et al. (2023). 120 people participated in the study, 40 of whom were students from a religious school (MAN), a vocational school (SMKN), and a high school (SMAN). With 86% of pupils demonstrating strong resilience and 14% demonstrating moderate resilience, the results showed that authoritative parenting significantly impacted academic resilience. The results highlighted how important parents are as children's first teachers and how open, communicative, and supportive parenting practices are essential for building resilience. It has been demonstrated that authoritative parenting, which strikes a balance between communication, rule negotiation, and emotional support, improves students' academic performance and flexibility.The study underscores the importance of collaboration among schools, parents, and communities to create nurturing environments that support student resilience and success.

Using the Social Cognitive Theory as a framework, Ye Shengyao, Salarzadeh Jenatabadi, & Mustafa (2022) investigated the connection between parenting style and academic resilience in teenagers. 518 undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral students from Zhejiang, Shanghai, and Jiangsu, China, were included in the study's sample; more than 60% of them were over 25. The Parental Authority Questionnaire was used to evaluate parenting styles, and the mediating effects of academic drive and self-efficacy were examined. The findings demonstrated that parenting style had a beneficial direct and indirect relationship with academic resilience, with the indirect effects—mediated by academic drive and self-efficacy—being noticeably larger. In this relationship, self-efficacy was found to be the most

significant mediator. The results highlight the importance of academic drive and self-efficacy in boosting academic resilience, indicating that these elements may have a greater influence than parental style. This study emphasises how crucial it is to support students' motivation and self-efficacy in order to enhance their academic performance and resilience.

Among 1,592 teenage students, Supervia (2022) investigated the mediation function of self-esteem in the association between resilience and life satisfaction. The Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS), the Brief Resilience Scale (BRS), and Rosenberg's Self-esteem Scale (RSE) were used to gather data. Descriptive statistics, correlations, and mediation analysis were performed using SPSS v26.0's MACRO. Significant relationships between resilience, life happiness, and self-esteem were found in the study. The association between resilience and life satisfaction was shown to be strengthened by self-esteem, which was found to be a significant mediator. The results emphasise how important self-esteem is for supporting teenagers' academic and personal growth. Students' general well-being can be supported by fostering self-esteem, which can also increase resilience and life satisfaction.

Rationale of the study

Communication within the family is crucial in forming a person's social and emotional skills. Gaining insight into how early family interactions support adaptive behaviour in trying situations can be achieved by analysing family communication patterns as a predictor of assertiveness and resilience. While resilience enables people to successfully navigate hardship, assertiveness is essential for establishing personal boundaries and articulating demands. Examining these two outcomes in relation to family dynamics has important ramifications for family therapy and psychological interventions, especially when it comes to developing communication styles that support emotional flexibility and good interpersonal skills.

Current study

This study aims to explore the relationship of family communication patterns with assertiveness and academic resilience among male and female college students. A person's emotional, social, and behavioural traits are greatly influenced by their family's communication patterns, which are the methods in which families connect and share information. The study will look into how young people' development of assertiveness and academic resilience is impacted by two distinct communication orientations: conversation-oriented and conformity-oriented.

With a focus on male and female college students in a range of academic fields, the study will use a correlational research approach. To guarantee representation from a range of family and cultural backgrounds, a convenient sampling technique will be employed. Participants will finish standardised tests such as Cassidy's Academic Resilience Scale, the Rathus Assertiveness Schedule, and the Revised Family Communication Patterns Inventory. Statistical methods like Spearman correlation and t-tests will be used to analyse the data in order to look at the gender-based relationships and disparities between the variables. The results will shed light on how family communication strategies help male and female college students develop important psychological qualities like assertiveness and academic resilience. This research aims to contribute to the development of family-centered interventions and strategies to promote better emotional and social outcomes for young adults.

Chapter III

Methodology

Aim

To assess the relationship of family communication patterns with assertiveness and academic resilience among college students

Problem Statement

Whether there is a relationship between family communication pattern, assertiveness and academic resilience in college students?

Objectives

- To find out the relationship between conversation orientation and assertiveness in college students.
- To find out the relationship between conformity orientation and assertiveness in college students.
- To find out the relationship between conversation orientation and academic resilience in college students.
- To find out the relationship between conformity orientation and academic resilience in college students.
- To find out the significant difference between males and females on conversation orientation and conformity orientation.
- To find out the significant difference between males and females on assertiveness.
- To find out the significant difference between males and females on academic resilience.

Hypothesis

H_1: There is no significant relationship between conversation orientation and assertiveness in college students.

H_2: There is no significant relationship between confirmity orientation and assertiveness in college students.

H_3: There is no significant relationship between conversation orientation and academic resilience in college students.

H_4: There is no significant relationship between conformity orientation and academic resilience in college students.

H_5There is no significant difference between male and female on conversation and conformity orientation

H_6: There is no significant difference between male and female college students on assertiveness.

H_7: There is no significant difference between male and female college students on academic resilience.

Operational definition

Family communication pattern is the sum of total of scores of conversation orientation assessed in 15 item and sum of total of scores of conformity orientation in 11 item family communication pattern scale developed by Koerner & Fitzpatrick (2002).

Assertiveness is the sum of total of scores assessed in 30 item Rathus assertiveness schedule scale developed by Spencer A. Rathus (1973).

Academic resilience is sum of total of scores assessed in 30 item Academic resilience scale developed by Cassidy (2016).

Research design

The study used a cross-sectional quantitative approach were the study collected numerical data at a single point in time to analyze patterns, relationships, or differences among variables within a specific population. A correlational research design was also used to find out the relationship between variables.

Sampling

The population of the current study includes both male and female students aged between 18-25 years. The data was collected from the college students in Kerala. A sample consisting of 271 college students, both genders (129 males and 142 females) was taken from different colleges of Kerala. Convenient sampling method was used for the collection of data.

Inclusion Criteria

- Participants who are 18-25 years of college going.
- Those who are the residence of Kerala.

Exclusion Criteria

- Those who are orphan
- Those who are not the residence of Kerala.
- Individuals who lack English proficiency are excluded from the study.

Measures

Family communication pattern questionnaire

The revised family communication patterns questionnaire (RFCPQ) was developed in 2002 by Koerner and Fitzpatrick. It includes 26 items rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from completely disagree (score 0) to completely agree (score 4) to evaluate two sub-scales of conversation orientation (15 items) and conformity orientation (11 items). The score range in the conversation orientation and conformity orientation sub-scales is 0–60 and 0–44, respectively. A higher score in conformity orientation emphasizes harmonious opinions, attitudes, avoiding conflict, and inter-dependence among members. Conversation orientation is defined as creating a free and comfortable space for family members to participate in conversations on various topics. Children of families with higher conversation orientation scores have better mental health and academic achievement with higher capacity for adaptability. The reliability of the questionnaire was confirmed with a cronbach's alpha

coefficient of 0.87 and 0.81 for conversation orientation and conformity orientation, respectively. Higher scores indicate higher levels of conversation orientation and conformity orientation.

Rathus Assertiveness Schedule (RAS)

Rathus assertiveness schedule was developed in 1973 by Spencer A. Rathus. This 30-item instrument was designed to measure assertiveness, or what the author called social boldness. Respondents are asked to rate 30 social situations according to how characteristic each is of their own experience. This widely used instrument provides the practitioner with clients' impressions of their own assertiveness and frankness, and can be used to provide positive feedback to clients during treatment, which is especially important in working with assertiveness problems. The RAS does not seem to be affected by social desirability. Data are reported for a sample of 68 undergraduates which also were used in the reliability analysis. The subjects had an age range from 17 to 27 years. The mean RAS was .294 with a standard deviation of 29.121. At an eight-week post test the mean was 1.62 with a standard deviation of 27.632.

Items are rated in terms of how descriptive the item is of the respondent. Ratings are from +3 to -3. Seventeen items are reverse-scored. Scores are determined by summing item ratings, and can range from -90 to +90. Negative scores reflect nonassertiveness and positive scores reflect assertiveness The RAS has evidence of good internal consistency and stability. Split-half reliability was .77. Test-retest reliability over an eight-week period was .78. The RAS has good concurrent validity. Scores on the instrument have been shown to correlate with measures of boldness, outspokenness, assertiveness, aggressiveness, and confidence. Strong concurrent validity also is seen in the correlation between RAS scores and trained raters' rankings of assertiveness.

Academic Resilience Scale

ARS-30 was developed by Cassidy (2016). The scale consists of 30 items in total. The measurement tool consists of perseverance, reflective and adaptive help-seeking, negative affectivity, and emotional response. The Cronbach alpha internal consistency reliability coefficient values for the sub-dimensions of the scale were .83, .78, and .80, respectively; The total score of the scale was found to be .90. The total score of the scale was found to be .90. Item-total correlations range from .41 to 63. Scale questions are in five-point likert type ranging from strongly agree (score 1) to strongly disgaree (score 5). Some items are reverse-scored so a score of 5 becomes 1, 2 becomes 4, and so on: 2, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30. The highest score that can be obtained from the scale is 150. The high scores obtained from the scale indicate a high level of academic resilience.

Table 1

Shows reliability of scales

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha
Family communication pattern scale	0.896
Rathus assertiveness schedule	0.828
Academic resilience scale	0.919

Procedure

The participants were informed of the study's goal. Prior to data collection, their informed consent was obtained. They were instructed to respond honestly and assured that their identity would be kept confidential, with the provided information used solely for research purposes. The measure was administered in English. Each individual received a

questionnaire via Google Forms, which was required to be completed immediately within the allotted time. The collected data was then scored and analyzed.

Ethical consideration

The study adheres to strict ethical guidelines to ensure the rights, dignity, and well-being of all participants. Participation in the study is entirely voluntary, and individuals will not be coerced or pressured into taking part. Before data collection begins, participants will be provided with a consent form that outlines the purpose of the study, its procedures, and any potential risks or benefits. Confidentiality will be strictly maintained, ensuring that all personal information remains secure and anonymous. The study is designed to protect participants from any form of harm, distress, or discomfort. Additionally, participants will be fully informed about the study's objectives, and any necessary clarifications will be provided before data collection. They will also have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without facing any negative consequences. By following these ethical principles, the study ensures that participants' rights and well-being are safeguarded throughout the research process.

Data analysis

Jamovi (version 2.6.24) was used for data analysis. Descriptive statistics were applied to summarize demographic data. To assess the relationship between variables, Spearman's correlation analysis was conducted. The Mann-Whitney U test was used to compare gender differences. Normality testing revealed that the data were not normally distributed, so non-parametric tests were employed.

Table 2

Normality testing

	Shapiro-wilk	
	w	*p*
Conversation orientation	0.936	<.001
Conformity orientation	0.937	<.001
Assertiveness	0.975	<.001
Academic resilience	0.984	0.004

Table 3

Normality testing for gender differences and relationship status

	Groups	**Shapiro-wilk**	
		w	p
Conversation orientation	Men	0.901	<.001
	women	0.977	0.016
Conformity orientation	Men	0.918	<.001
	Women	0.947	<.001
Assertiveness	Men	0.976	0.020
	Women	0.978	0.020
Academic resilience	Men	0.964	0.002
	Women	0.988	0.230

Chapter IV

Result and discussion

The present study aimed to examine the relationship of family communication pattern with assertiveness and academic resilience in college students. Data were analyzed using Jamovi, employing non-parametric tests, including the Mann-Whitney U test for group comparisons and Spearman's correlation analysis for assessing relationships between variables. This chapter presents the findings of the data analysis that were utilized to define the sample and answer the research questions, as well as the associated hypothesis. The interpretations of the findings are also presented here.

Descriptive statistics

Table 4

The table shows the mean and standard deviation of Conversation orientation, conformity orientation, assertiveness, and academic resilience.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Conversation orientation	271	56.04	9.26
Conformity orientation	271	39.16	6.29
Assertiveness	271	1.77	22.33
Academic resilience	271	103.23	16.87

The N value (number of participants) for Conversation orientation, Conformity orientation, assertiveness and academic resilience is 271. The mean of the conversation orientation, conformity orientation, assertiveness, and academic resilience is found to be 56.04, 39.16, 1.77 and 103.23 respectively. The standard deviation of the conversation orientation, conformity orientation, assertiveness, and academic resilience is found to be 9.26, 6.29, 22.33 and 16.87 respectively.

Correlational analysis

$\boldsymbol{H_1}$**:** There is no significant relationship between conversation orientation and assertiveness in college students.

Table 5

Indicates the correlation between Conversation orientation and assertiveness among college students

	Assertiveness
Conversation orientation	0.128*

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

Spearman's rho correlation shows significant low positive relationship [r (271) = 0.128, p=0.05] between conversation orientation and assertiveness among college students. However, the strength of this relationship is weak, implying that while open communication within families may contribute to assertiveness, other factors likely play a more substantial role. Thus, as the level of conversation orientation increases, assertiveness also increases. Hence, the H_1, Conversation orientation and assertiveness will show significant relationship is rejected. A likely explanation for this observation is that assertiveness is shaped by various factors—like personal traits, social interactions, and wider cultural influences—rather than just family communication. As a result, although open communication within families fosters assertiveness, its effect is fairly minor in comparison to these other factors.

These results are consistent with the study of Nakhaee et al. (2017), who discovered that students with a high discussion orientation were noticeably more assertive than those with a conforming orientation. The notion that open family communication encourages assertive behaviour is supported by their study's findings that conversation direction explained 9% of the variance in assertiveness. The current study's poor link, however, raises the possibility that college students may not be as strongly impacted by conversation direction on assertiveness as high school students are. This diversity may be explained by differences in individual personality traits, societal influences, and developmental stages.

In support of this low positive relationship, Atefifar, Younesi & Pakdaman (2020) examined the mediating function of assertiveness in the association between adolescent girls' relationships with the opposite sex and family communication patterns. Their results showed that although assertiveness affected relationships with the other sex as a result of familial communication patterns, there was no significant correlation between the two. This implies that additional psychological or environmental elements, rather than just familial communication patterns, may operate as a mediating role in the development of assertiveness. This supports the notion that the development of assertiveness is probably influenced by a variety of factors outside of family communication, as evidenced by the current study's weak association.

On the other hand, the results are in contrary to those of Khormaei & Zare (2017), who found that assertiveness is positively impacted by family conversation orientations. Additionally, their study discovered that emotion regulation serves as a mediating element, indicating that assertiveness is indirectly impacted by family communication through cognitive reappraisal techniques. Conversation orientation alone may not have as much of an impact on assertiveness as other psychological elements like emotion management, self-confidence, or social experiences, as suggested by the study's poor correlation.

H_2: There is no significant relationship between conformity orientation and assertiveness in college students.

Table 6

Indicates the correlation between Conformity orientation and assertiveness among college students

	Assertiveness
Conformity orientation	-0.088

Spearman's rho correlation shows no significant relationship [r (271) = -0.088] between conversation orientation and assertiveness among college students. Thus, as the level of conformity orientation increases, assertiveness not increases and vice versa. Hence, the H_2, Conformity orientation and assertiveness does not show significant relationship is not rejected. These findings indicate that individuals from families emphasizing conformity—where obedience and family unity are prioritized—do not necessarily develop higher or lower assertiveness levels. One potential reason for the absence of a meaningful relationship is that conformity orientation mainly focuses on obedience and family cohesion instead of promoting personal self-expression. In families characterized by a strong conformity orientation, individuals may be urged to foster harmony and follow existing norms instead of expressing their own views. As a result, assertiveness—defined as the confident expression of one's ideas and self-advocacy—might not be directly fostered in these environments. Moreover, assertiveness is shaped by various factors (such as personality traits, social interactions, educational backgrounds) that can surpass the effects of family conformity.

These findings are consistent with earlier research by Khormaei & Zare (2017), who similarly found no significant correlation between assertiveness and conformity orientation. This suggests that organised family contexts that place a strong emphasis on conformity may not always encourage assertive behaviours. This suggests that rather than strict family structures, assertiveness may be more influenced by open communication, individual personality traits, social learning, and personal experiences.

H_3: There is no significant relationship between conversation orientation and academic resilience in college students.

Table 7

Indicates the correlation between Conversation orientation and academic resilience among college students

	Resilience
Conversation orientation	0.444***

***Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level.

Spearman's rho correlation shows significant moderate positive relationship [r (271) = 0.444, p=0.001] between conversation orientation and academic resilience among college students. Thus, as the level of conversation orientation increases, academic resilience also increases. Hence, the H_3, Conversation orientation and assertiveness will show significant relationship is rejected. One explanation for this outcome is that families with strong conversation orientation promote open discussions, resulting in a nurturing atmosphere. This setting allows students to enhance their problem-solving abilities, self-confidence, and adaptive coping strategies—elements crucial for academic resilience. Furthermore, transparent communication among family members can enhance emotional regulation and foster a proactive stance toward tackling academic difficulties, thereby supporting the moderate positive link noted between conversation orientation and academic resilience

According to research by Akbari et al. (2014), conversation orientation was found to negatively predict test anxiety and positively predict academic resilience, suggesting that open family conversations may operate as a buffer against academic stress.

Seo & Kwon (2016) revealed that conversation orientation significantly predicts academic resilience, including interpersonal communication abilities and personality factors. Their research highlighted the significance of efficient communication in enhancing students' capacity to manage academic obstacles.

While resilience was a major mediator, Zarei et al. (2013) found that both conformity and conversation orientations affected quality of life. According to their findings, children who are raised in conversation-oriented families are better able to cope with demands and difficulties from the outside world.

H_4: There is no significant relationship between conformity orientation and academic resilience in college students.

Table 8

Indicates the correlation between Conformity orientation and resilience among college students

	Resilience
Conformity orientation	0.026

Spearman's rho correlation shows no significant relationship [r (271) = 0.026] between conformity orientation and academic resilience among college students. Thus, as the level of conformity orientation increases, academic resilience not increases and vice versa. Hence, the H_4, Conformity orientation and academic resilience does not show significant relationship is not rejected. A possible reason for this result is that conformity orientation, which prioritizes following family standards and uniformity, may not promote the adaptive problem-solving abilities and independent coping methods critical for academic resilience. Other elements, like personal characteristics, transparent communication in the family, or outside support networks, might have a more significant impact on developing academic resilience.

According to research by Akbari et al. (2014), conformity orientation raised test anxiety, which indirectly implies that it can have a negative impact to resilience.

Seo & Kwon (2016) found that academic resilience was substantially predicted by conversation orientation rather than conformity orientation, which lends greater support to the theory that family contexts that are driven by conformity may not be very effective at building resilience. According to Zarei et al. (2013), quality of life was impacted by both conversation and conformity orientations; however, open family communication was more closely associated with resilience than strict conformity.

$\boldsymbol{H_5}$: There is no significant difference between male and female on conversation and conformity orientation

Table 9

Comparative analysis between Males and Females in Conversation and conformity orientation

Variable	Group	N	Mean	S.D	Mean difference	U	p	F	p
Conversation orientation	Male	129	53.3	9.93	5.00	5835	<0.001	1.172	0.280
	Female	142	58.5	7.84					
Conformity orientation	Male	129	38.2	6.36	2.00	7532	0.011	0.191	0.663
	Female	142	40.0	6.11					

To assess the difference between males and females in conversation and conformity orientation, Mann Whitney U test was conducted. The results indicated that there is a significant difference between males and females in conversation orientation (p =<0.001) and conformity orientation (p=0.011). Based on the mean, it can be understood that females have comparatively higher in females than males in both dimensions. Hence, H_5 is rejected.

Women are frequently raised to value interpersonal communication and emotional expression, resulting in greater conversation orientation, while conventional gender roles may promote adherence and nurturing tendencies, leading to increased conformity orientation. In various cultural settings, women are anticipated to foster harmonious connections and follow traditional family standards, leading them to internalize both open dialogue and conformity more profoundly than men. Additionally, the Family Communication Patterns (FCP) theory posits that family settings encouraging both conversation and conformity can influence communication behaviors, and for females, these two elements might coexist because of the focus on both relational expressiveness and adherence within the family framework.

According to research by Samaneh Nakhaee et.al (2017) titled "The Relationship of Family Communication Pattern with Adolescents' Assertiveness," females were more likely to have conversation orientation. According to the findings of the study "The Influence of Conformity Orientation on Communication Patterns in Family Conversations" by Ascan F. Koerner and Kristen Cvancara (2002), women tend to perceive higher degrees of conformity orientation in their families than men do. This implies that expectations of agreement and consistency in family environments may be more perceptible to or impact women.

H_6: There is no significant difference between male and female college students on assertiveness.

Table 10

Comparative analysis between Males and Females in Assertiveness.

Variable	Group	N	Mean	S.D	Mean difference	U	p	F	p
Assertiveness	Male	129	8.02	25.1	-10.0	6652	<0.001	16.8333	<0.001
	Female	142	-3.89	17.7					

To assess the difference between males and females in assertiveness, Mann Whitney U test was conducted. The results indicated that there is a significant difference between males and females in assertiveness (p = 0.001). Based on the mean, it can be understood that males have comparatively higher assertiveness than females. Hence, H_6 is rejected. One potential reason is that gender socialization significantly influences behavior; from a young age, boys are typically urged to be self-reliant, competitive, and assertive, whereas girls tend to be socialized to prioritize cooperation and accommodation, potentially resulting in lower assertiveness scores for women. Moreover, conventional cultural standards and stereotypes often perceive assertiveness as a valued quality in men, promoting assertive actions in males while deterring them in females. Differences in personality might also play a role, as men frequently obtain higher scores on characteristics like dominance and extraversion, which are strongly associated with assertiveness.

The results suggest that males exhibit comparatively higher levels of assertiveness than females, aligning with findings from a study named assertiveness and anxiety: a coorelational study by Orenstein & Carr (1975). Their study also found that males scored significantly higher on the Rathus Assertiveness Schedule (RAS) compared to females, confirming a gender-based difference in assertiveness. This is consistent with the idea that

social and cultural expectations encourage men to adopt more dominant and outspoken behaviors, which may reinforce assertiveness.

The present study's findings align with those of Schmitt et al. (2008) and Costa, Terracciano & McCrae (2001), who reported that men tend to score higher on assertiveness-related traits across various cultures, possibly due to socialization practices that encourage independent and self-expressive behaviors in males. Sarkova et al. (2013), in their study "Associations between Assertiveness, Psychological Well-being, and Self-esteem in Adolescents," reported higher assertiveness levels among male adolescents compared to their female counterparts.

H_7: There is no significant difference between male and female college students on academic resilience.

Table 11

Comparative analysis between Males and Females in Academic resilience.

Variable	Group	N	Mean	S.D	Mean difference	U	p	F	p
Academic resilience	Male	129	98.3	17.2	9.00	6105	<0.001	0.0964	0.756
	Female	142	108	15.3					

To assess the difference between males and females in academic resilience, Mann Whitney U test was conducted. The results indicated that there is a significant difference between males and females in academic resilience (p = <0.001). Based on the mean, it can be understood that females have comparatively higher academic resilience than males. Hence, H_7 is rejected. One reason for the increased academic resilience seen in females is that they typically cultivate more effective coping strategies and enhanced emotional regulation as a

result of socialization patterns that highlight hard work, determination, and social support. Women are often anticipated to succeed in educational environments and typically display strong competitiveness in their coursework, which may enhance their resilience. Furthermore, studies indicate that women tend to pursue social support and employ problem-focused coping strategies, which improves their capacity to recover from difficulties. Along with increased academic involvement and conscientiousness, these adaptive methods aid in maintaining performance in challenging educational settings. Collectively, these elements could account for the reason females demonstrate relatively greater academic resilience than males.

Mwangi & Ireri (2017), in their study "Gender Differences in Academic Resilience and Academic Achievement among Secondary School Students in Kiambu County, Kenya," found that gender influences academic resilience, with girls exhibiting significantly higher academic resilience scores than boys. The results suggest that female students may be more inclined toward resilient responses, whereas male students may lack some characteristics commonly associated with resilience and may require additional support.

Chapter V

Conclusion

Key findings

- There is a significant relationship between conversation orientation and assertiveness in college students.
- There is no significant relationship between conformity orientation and assertiveness in college students.
- There is a significant relationship between conversation orientation and academic resilience in college students.
- There is no significant relationship between conformity orientation and academic resilience in college students.
- There is a significant difference between males and females on conversation and conformity orientation were females scored high in both conversation and conformity orientation, which may reflect the dual expectation of expressiveness and obedience in certain family or cultural contexts.
- There is a significant difference between males and females on assertiveness were males scored higher in assertiveness, aligning with traditional gender roles where men are expected to be more outspoken and independent.
- There is a significant difference between males and females on academic resilience were females scored higher in academic resilience, implying that they may develop stronger coping mechanisms and adaptability in academic settings.

Implications

The findings of this study have practical implications. Educational institutions can implement communication training initiatives to assist students in cultivating assertiveness and resilience, customized to their requirements. Fostering open communication at home can improve assertiveness and academic resilience. Interventions can focus on assertiveness

training for women and resilience development for men to address the disparities noted in gender roles.

The findings also have theoretical implications. They support the Family Communication Patterns (FCP) theory, showing that conversation orientation fosters positive outcomes, while conformity orientation has limited impact.

Finally, the findings have policy implications. Educational policies ought to incorporate training in communication skills within academic development initiatives. Programs that raise parental awareness can assist families in balancing expressiveness and structure for the enhancement of children's personal development. Strategies that are inclusive of all genders in education and counseling can guarantee that assertiveness and resilience are developed equally among genders.

Limitations

The research concentrated exclusively in college students, which could restrict the relevance of the results to younger individuals or those in the workforce. The existing sample may lack representation from various cultural and demographic backgrounds; incorporating a broader array of populations in future studies could result in more reliable and applicable results. Dependence on self-reported measures might have led to bias or inaccuracies; employing objective or multi-method evaluation strategies could enhance data quality and validity.

Due to the correlational aspect of the study, establishing cause-and-effect connections between conversation orientation and outcomes like assertiveness or resilience is not feasible. The research utilized a cross-sectional approach, gathering information at one specific moment. Carrying out longitudinal studies would enable the observation of changes and growth over time, probably producing more thorough and reliable outcomes. The data failed

to satisfy normality assumptions, potentially impacting the robustness and validity of the statistical analyses.

The sample comprised diverse family types with distinct communication styles; nonetheless, the uneven distribution hindered a significant comparison of the particular effects of these family types on assertiveness and resilience. Additionally, time constraints limited the scope of data collection and analysis, which may have affected the depth of findings. Future studies with extended timelines could allow for a more comprehensive exploration of these relationships.

Recommendations for future research

Future studies ought to prioritize longitudinal research to explore how family communication patterns affect assertiveness and resilience across time. Cross-cultural research is essential to ascertain if the noted gender differences continue to exist in various cultural settings. Moreover, experimental studies might assist in determining causal relationships between conversation orientation and its psychological impacts. Including personality traits like extraversion and openness in upcoming research would offer understanding on the interplay of these characteristics with family communication styles in forecasting assertiveness and resilience. Studies on intervention programs ought to investigate if organized assertiveness and resilience training can assist in diminishing gender differences in these qualities. Additionally, future research should take socioeconomic status into account to comprehend how financial background affects family communication styles, assertiveness, and resilience.

Conclusion

This study aimed to examine the relationship of family communication patterns with assertiveness and academic resilience among college students. The tools used in the study were Revised family communication patterns questionnaire (RFCPQ), Rathus assertiveness

schedule, and Academic Resilience Scale. Data were analyzed using Jamovi, employing non-parametric tests, including the Mann-Whitney U test for group comparisons and Spearman's correlation analysis for assessing relationships between variables. The results indicated that conversation orientation showed a significant positive relationship with assertiveness which indicating that open family communication slightly supports assertiveness. Conformity orientation had no significant relationship with assertiveness suggesting that adherence to family norms does not necessarily reduce or enhance assertiveness. Also it was found that conversation orientation had a significant positive relationship with academic resilience meaning that open family communication plays a notable role in developing academic resilience in students. Conformity orientation had no significant relationship with academic resilience indicating that strict adherence to family norms does not contribute to resilience-building. There was a significant gender difference between family communication patterns, assertiveness and academic resilience. It is found that males scored higher in assertiveness, aligning with traditional gender roles where men are expected to be more outspoken and independent. Also females scored higher in academic resilience, implying that they may develop stronger coping mechanisms and adaptability in academic settings. Females scored high in both conversation and conformity orientation, which may reflect the dual expectation of expressiveness and obedience in certain family or cultural contexts. Among the family communication styles studied, conversation orientation was found to be the most impactful, aligning with earlier research that connects it to assertiveness, academic resilience, and general well-being. These results highlight the necessity for initiatives designed to improve conversation orientation in families to promote assertiveness and resilience. In conclusion, this research enhances psychological studies by enriching our comprehension of the relationship between conversation and conformity tendencies, which has implications for therapy methods aimed at enhancing these characteristics.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Consent Form

Greetings, my name is Fathima Thasneem, currently pursuing M.Sc. Psychology at St Teresa's college, Ernakulam. As part of my final year project, I am conducting a study on the relationship of family communication patterns on assertiveness and academic resilience among college students.

If you are between the ages of 18-25 years, I kindly request your participation in this study, as it is necessary for my academic excellence. It will only take 10-15 minutes. Your cooperation is valuable for this study and request you to be sincere as possible while answering the questions. All the information collected for this study will be kept strictly confidential and only be used for research purposes. I thank you in advance for participating in my study and spending your valuable time for it. Feel free to contact me for any queries.
Email: fathimathasneemkm@gmail.com

I am willing to participant in this study. I am aware that I can withdraw from this study when I need. I also understand that all information will be strictly confidential and my identity will remain anonymous. (Yes/No)

Appendix B: Sociodemographic Details

Name (in initials):

Age:

Gender:

Socio-economic status(lower/middle/upper):

Place of residence (urban/rural):

Are you an orphan (Yes/No):

Education:

Appendix C: Revised Family Communication Pattern Scale

Read the questions carefully and give ✔ for each question that is more applicable to you.

	Strongly disagree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly agree**
1) In our family we often talk about topics like politics and religion where some persons disagree with others.					
2) My parents often say something like "Every member of the family should have some say in family decisions."					
3) My parents often ask my opinion when the family is talking about something.					
4) My parents encourage me to challenge their ideas and beliefs.					
5) My parents often say something like "You should always look at both sides of an issue."					
6) I usually tell my parents what I am thinking about things.					
7) I can tell my parents almost anything.					
8) In our family we often talk about our feelings and emotions.					
9) My parents and I often have long, relaxed conversations about nothing in particular.					
10) I really enjoy talking with my parents, even when we disagree.					

13) We often talk as a family about things we have done during the day.					
14) In our family, we often talk about our plans and hopes for the future.					
15) My parents like to hear my opinion, even when I don't agree with them.					
16) When anything really important is involved, my parents expect me to obey without question.					
17) In our home, my parents usually have the last word.					
18) My parents feel that it is important to be the boss.					
19) My parents sometimes become irritated with my views if they are different from theirs.					
20) If my parents don't approve of it, they don't want to know about it.					
21) When I am at home, I am expected to obey my parents' rules.					
22) My parents often say things like "You'll know better when you grow up."					
23) My parents often say things like "My ideas are right and you should not question them."					
24) My parents often say things like "A child should not argue with adults."					
25) My parents often say things like "There are some things that just shouldn't be talked about."					
26) My parents often say things like "You should give in on arguments rather than risk making people mad."					

Appendix D: Rathus Assertiveness Schedule

Indicate how characteristic or descriptive each of the following statements is of you by using the code given below.

+3 = Very characteristic of me, extremely descriptive

+2 = Rather characteristic of me, quite descriptive

+1 = Somewhat characteristic of me, slightly descriptive

-1 = Somewhat uncharacteristic of me, slightly nondescriptive

-2 = Rather uncharacteristic of me, quite nondescriptive

-3 = Very uncharacteristic of me, extremely nondescriptive

	Very characteristic of me	Rather characteristic of me	Somewhat characteristic of me	Somewhat uncharacteristic of me	Rather uncharacteristic of me	Very uncharacteristic of me
1. Most people seem to be more aggressive and assertive than I am.*						
2. I have hesitated to make or accept dates because of "shyness."*						
3. When the food served at a restaurant is not done to my satisfaction, I complain about it						

to the waiter or waitress.						
4. I am careful to avoid hurting other people's feelings, even when I feel that I have been injured.*						
5. If a salesman has gone to considerable trouble to show me merchandise that is not quite suitable, I have a difficult time saying "No."*						
6. When I am asked to do something, I insist upon knowing why.						
7. There are times when I look for a good vigorous argument.						
8. I strive to get ahead as well as most people in my position.						
9. To be honest, people often take						

advantage of me.*						
10. I enjoy starting conversations with new acquaintances and strangers.						
11. I often don't know what to say to attractive persons of the opposite sex.*						
12. I will hesitate to make phone calls to business establishments and institutions.*						
13. I would rather apply for a job or for admission to a college by writing letters than by going through with personal interviews.*						
14. I find it embarrassing to return merchandise.*						
15. If a close and respected relative						

were annoying me, I would smother my feelings rather than express my annoyance.*						
16. I have avoided asking questions for fear of sounding stupid.*						
17. During an argument I am sometimes afraid that I will get so upset that I will shake all over.*						
18. If a famed and respected lecturer makes a statement which I think is incorrect, I will have the audience hear my point of view as well.						
19. I avoid arguing over prices with clerks and salesmen.*						
20. When I have done something important or						

worthwhile, I manage to let others know about it.						
21. I am open and frank about my feelings.						
22. If someone has been spreading false and bad stories about me, I see him/her as soon as possible to "have a talk" about it.						
23. I often have a hard time saying "No."*						
24. I tend to bottle up my emotions rather than make a scene.*						
25. I complain about poor service in a restaurant and elsewhere.						
26. When I am given a compliment, I sometimes just						

don't know what to say.*						
27. If a couple near me in a theater or at a lecture were conversing rather loudly, I would ask them to be quiet or to take their conversation elsewhere.						
28. Anyone attempting to push ahead of me in a line is in for a good battle.						
29. I am quick to express an opinion.						
30. There are times when I just can't say anything.*						

Appendix E: Academic Resilience Scale

Please read the paragraph that is given below and do your best to imagine that you are in the situation being described. If you were in the situation described below, how do you think you would react?

Read each of the statements below and select one of the options between 1 (strongly agree) and 5 (strongly disagree) that best reflects how much you think each statement describes how you personally would react. Please make sure that you give a response to ALL the statements and try to be as sincere and precise as possible in your answers.

You have received your mark for a recent assignment and it is a 'fail'. The marks for two other recent assignments were also poorer than you would want as you are aiming to get as good a degree as you can because you have clear career goals in mind and don't want to disappoint your family. The feedback from the tutor for the assignment is quite critical, including reference to 'lack of understanding' and 'poor writing and expression', but it also includes ways that the work could be improved. Similar comments were made by the tutors who marked your other two assignments.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. I would not accept the tutors' feedback					
2. I would use the feedback to improve my work					
3. I would just give up					

4. I would use the situation to motivate myself					
5. I would change my career plans					
6. I would probably get annoyed					
7. I would begin to think my chances of success at university were poor					
8. I would see the situation as a challenge					
9. I would do my best to stop thinking negative thoughts					
10. I would see the situation as temporary					
11. I would work harder					
12. I would probably get depressed					
13. I would try to think of new solutions					
14. I would be very disappointed					
15. I would blame the tutor					
16. I would keep trying					
17. I would not change my long-					

term goals and ambitions					
18. I would use my past successes to help motivate myself					
19. I would begin to think my chances of getting the job I want were poor					
20. I would start to monitor and evaluate my achievements and effort					
21. I would seek help from my tutors					
22. I would give myself encouragement					
23. I would stop myself from panicking					
24. I would try different ways to study					
25. I would set my own goals for achievement					
26. I would seek encouragement from my family and friends					

27. I would try to think more about my strengths and weaknesses to help me work better					
28. I would feel like everything was ruined and was going wrong					
29. I would start to self-impose rewards and punishments depending on my performance					
30. I would look forward to showing that I can improve my grades					