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Longitudinal Associations between Resilience and Quality of Life in Eating Disorders

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Abstract

Objective

This study examined the longitudinal reciprocal associations between resilience factors, quality of life (QoL) domains, and symptoms of eating disorders (EDs). Hypotheses included predictive paths from resilience factors of “acceptance of self and life” and “personal competence” to increased QoL and predictive paths from previous levels of QoL to resilience.

Method

A total of 184 patients with EDs (mean age = 29.55, SD = 9.17, 94.8% women) completed measures of resilience, QoL, and EDs symptoms over three waves spaced six months apart. Hypotheses were tested by path analysis.

Results

Resilience factors predicted improvements in psychological health and social relationship domains of QoL and a reduction of ED symptoms over time. In addition, psychological health increased acceptance of self and life consistently over time, whereas physical health increased the competence component of resilience.

Discussion

The relationships between resilience factors and QoL are reciprocal, with several mediational paths. A spiral of recursive influences between resilience factors and QoL can take place in people with EDs. This possibility offers new perspectives to understanding the process of recovery in patients with ED.

Keywords

Eating disorders; resilience; quality of life; anorexia nervosa; bulimia nervosa

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