

Putative Risk and Resilience Factors After Changes in Admissions Requirements

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Why study putative risk and resilience factors before and after admissions requirement changes?

Putative risk and resilience variables refer to modifiable individual difference variables associated with differences in risk profiles for developing or maintaining various mental health disorders. Putative risk factors include state anger, illness and injury sensitivity, pain anxiety, fear of negative evaluation, anxiety sensitivity, and intolerance of uncertainty. In contrast, self-perceived resilience, is broadly associated with a reduced risk of mental health challenges.

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) changed the cadet admission requirements in February 2022, and therefore the potential impact of changes in admissions requirements on the putative risk and resilience profiles of cadets was unknown.

The current study

The current study was designed to assess whether changes to admissions requirements were associated with differences in putative risk and resilience factors among cadets.

RCMP cadets recruited before (n=772; 72.2% men) and after (n=1012; 78.6% men) the admissions requirement changes completed measures of self-perceived resilience, fear of negative evaluation, intolerance of uncertainty, anxiety sensitivity, state anger, pain anxiety, illness and injury sensitivity.

Differences among cadets recruited before and after the admissions policy change were assessed, as well as differences between cadets recruited after the admissions policy change and published young adult samples.

We would like to thank all participating RCMP for their involvement in the study. The Study is made possible by a large and diverse team. We thank each team member, past and present for their contributions to the Study.

Results

Compared to cadets recruited before the admissions requirement changes, cadets recruited after the admissions requirement changes evidenced:

1. Statistically significantly lower intolerance of uncertainty;
2. Statistically significantly lower state anger; and,
3. Statistically significantly higher scores on the escape/avoidance dimension of pain anxiety.

Compared to other young adult general population samples, cadets recruited after the admissions requirement changes evidenced:

1. Statistically significantly lower scores on all putative risk variables; and,
2. Statistically significantly higher self-perceived resilience.

Conclusions

The current results provide the first assessment of how changes in admissions requirements influenced the putative risk and resilience profiles of RCMP cadets. The current results indicate that, no matter which admissions requirements were used, RCMP cadets recruited to the Cadet Training Program remain at a lower risk for the development of mental health disorder symptoms compared to young adults more broadly.

Overall, the current results suggest that the policy change may have been beneficial in reducing certain known mental health disorder risk factors in the population of cades, but longitudinal research is needed.

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Read the full study here:

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The RCMP Longitudinal
PTSD Study



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