

GENDER DIFFERENCE ON RESILIENCE AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS OF KASHMIR

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Abstract: Resilience is an individual's tendency to cope with stress and adversity (Dictionary reference.com 2013). There are a limited number of researches conducted on gender and resilience throughout the world and especially in Jammu & Kashmir (India). Therefore, this cross-sectional research is one of the initial attempts to study the role of gender on resilience. The aim of this study is to examine the role of gender on resilience among male and female university students of Kashmir, India. A sample of 100 university students (male=50 & female=50) were selected using stratified random sampling procedures from three universities of Kashmir. The resilience was measured from the data collected on Wegnild & Young's scale (1993) and the data was analysed by independent student's t-test with the help of SPSS. The findings of this study reveal that there is a significant gender difference in resilience among university students of Kashmir.

Keywords: Resilience, gender, coping techniques.

Introduction: Resilience as a personality characteristic that moderates the negative effects of stress and promotes adaptation has been a topic of research for a number of years. Frequently, the quality of resilience is attributed to individuals who, in the face of overwhelming adversity, are able to adapt and restore equilibrium to their lives and avoid the potentially deleterious effects of stress (Beardslee, 1989; Bebbington, Sturt, Tennant, & Hurry, 1984; Byrne, et al., 1986; Caplan, 1990; Masten & O'Connor, 1989; O'Connell & Mayo, 1988; Richmond & Beardslee, 1988; Rutter, 1985). Resilience is defined as an individual's ability to successfully adapt to life tasks in the face of social disadvantage or highly adverse conditions (Pęciłło, Małgorzata, 2016). Adversity and stress can come in the shape of family or relationship problems, health problems, or workplace and financial worries, among others (APA, 2014). Resilience is one's ability to bounce back from a negative experience with "competent functioning". Resilience is not a rare ability; in reality, it is found in the average individual and it can be learned and developed by virtually anyone. Resilience should be considered a process, rather than a trait to be had. It is a process of individuation through a structured system with gradual discovery of personal and unique abilities (Rutter M., 2008). A common misconception is that resilient people are free from negative emotions or thoughts, and remain optimistic in most or all situations. To the contrary, resilient individuals have, through time, developed proper coping techniques that allow them to effectively and relatively easily navigate around or through crises (Block, J. H., & Block, J., 1980; Klohnen, E. C., 1996; Werner, E., & Smith, R. S., 1992; Wolin, S. J., & Wolin, S., 1993). In other words, people who demonstrate resilience are people with optimistic attitude and positive emotionality and are, by practice, able to effectively balance negative emotions with positive

ones (APA, 2014). In military studies it has been found that resilience is also dependent on group support: unit cohesion and morale is the best predictor of combat resiliency within a unit or organization. Resilience is highly correlated to peer support and group cohesion. Units with high cohesion tend to experience a lower rate of psychological breakdowns than units with low cohesion and morale. High cohesion and morale enhance adaptive stress reactions (Department of the Army, 2009).

Objectives: 1) To study resilience among university students studying in Kashmir, and 2) To study the significance of gender difference in resilience among university students studying in Kashmir.

Hypothesis: There is a significant difference in resilience between male and female university students.

Design: This cross-sectional research consists of a sample of 100 university students (50=males and 50=females) studying in Kashmir (J&K), India, selected by stratified random sampling method. A standard questionnaire was distributed to the sample. The sample was compared with reference to their gender. The data collected from the sample was analysed by various statistical techniques such as Mean, SD, and Independent sample t-test with the help of SPSS. The present study is a comparative study. Only the data collected from the university students studying in Kashmir were included in current study.

Inclusive Criteria: The university students studying in the universities of Kashmir and belonging to Jammu and Kashmir. **Exclusive Criteria:** They students of Jammu and Kashmir studying outside of the State.

Statistical Techniques: For achieving the desired objectives, the collected data was analysed by using Mean, SD, and Independent Samples t-test.

Tool Description: The Wagnild & Young's resilience scale (1993) is a tool for assessing resilience. The RS consists of 26 questions assessing the degree of individual resilience (personal competence and acceptance of self and life); a positive personality characteristic that enhances individual adaptation.

Each item is scored from one 'strongly disagree' to seven 'strongly agree'. Scores of the all 26 items are then summed, yielding a minimum score of 26 and a maximum score of 182. There is no reverse coding. Low scores indicate low levels of resilience and high scores indicate high levels of resilience.

Table 2: Showing means difference of resilience between male and female subjects.

Gender	N	Mean	SD	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Resilience Male	50	133.10	23.551	2.351	98	.021*
Female	50	122.22	22.720			

*Significant difference at 0.05 level of significance.

The results presented in the above table reveal the t-value of the mean scores of resilience with reference to gender. An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the mean scores of resilience between male and female subjects. The results showed that there is a significant difference in the mean scores of resilience between male and female subjects. Males have higher levels of resilience (N=50, M=133.10, SD=23.551) than females (N=50, M=122.22, SD=22.720); $t=2.351$, $df=98$, $p<.05$, two-tailed. Hence, the hypothesis, "there is a significant difference in resilience between male and female university students" is accepted.

Discussion: Psychological resilience is an individual's ability to successfully adapt to life tasks in the face of social disadvantage or highly adverse conditions (Pecillo, Malgorzata, 2016). The hypothesis of the present study was that there is a significance of difference in resilience between male and female students. To examine this difference independent-samples t-test was used. The results showed that there is a significant difference in resilience between male and female university students. Hence, the hypothesis is accepted. The results are similar and consistent with other studies such as Sreehari R., & Radhakrishnan A. (2015). While on the other hand the study conducted by Jagpreet Kaur (2011); Jaya Jotwani (2016) produced the opposite results for gender on psychological coping (hardiness) against stress. The results of these studies showed that females possess less hardiness as compared to males. This may be attributed to the differential treatment which is given to the boys and girls in some Indian societies. There is a preference of male children in Indian context. Hence, the preferential treatment and the exposure given to the male children as compared to the female counterparts may be responsible for these results (Verma, R. K. & Ghadially, R., 1985). So

these results are similar and consistent to the present study.

Implications, Limitations and Final Conclusion:

There is a limited research work conducted on the role of gender on resilience among university students and this research attempts to provide an initial opportunity to study this important area. However, some limitations are apparent. First, on the basis of the sample examined in this study, findings are restricted on resilience in the Kashmiri culture. Despite a number of cross-cultural studies that revealed similar results on resilience in North American and European samples (Frydenberg & Lewis, 1993; Prelow, Weaver, & Swenson, 2006), cultural differences cannot be ruled out. Second, resilience has been assessed by a self-report questionnaire, but other informants were not included. Third, more contemporary theories have portrayed males as competitive and task-oriented in problem solving, especially in work domains, although these questions were not adequately assessed in this study. From the results of the above finding it can be concluded that male students have a higher level of resilience than female students at university level. Conclusively, however, the results of this study support the multidimensional operationalization of resilience. Thereby, inconsistent findings of studies examining effects of gender on resilience styles can be partly explained by methodological differences. Finally, findings warrant further investigations of the impact of gender on resilience. With such information, students at university level who were identified as a risk population could be specifically supported by preventive mental health care in Kashmir (J&K), or elsewhere.

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